

# GCSE HANDBOOK



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## CHOOSING YOUR GCSE SUBJECTS – EXPLANATORY NOTES

During the first three years of Senior House, you have been studying a broad range of subjects. In Lower 5 and Upper 5 you can start to narrow down this range in order to shape your curriculum to suit your own personal interests and strengths. In September, you will embark on a two-year course, culminating in GCSE examinations in the summer of 2026.

In addition to the core and optional subjects all pupils will continue to study PE, PSHE and Careers.

### **Choosing your subjects**

Choose subjects you will enjoy and which will provide you with a varied set of subjects to keep you challenged and stimulated. Talk to your teachers, and to girls in Lower 5 and Upper 5, to help you decide.

Remember that to be a leader in any field you must build on your natural abilities, tap into your enthusiasm for the subjects you like and challenge yourself in a range of activities. DON'T follow the crowd or look for easy options but DO look for subjects which you enjoy and are good at.

# CORE SUBJECTS

## LANGUAGE, EDUQAS

GCSE English Language enables students to:

- Read a wide range of texts critically.
- Write effectively for different purposes and audiences.
- Use language imaginatively, creatively and persuasively.
- Cite evidence effectively and pertinently to support views.
- Acquire a wide vocabulary and understand grammatical terminology and linguistic conventions.
- Use spoken English in a range of ways.

There are two examinations:

**Paper 1 20<sup>th</sup> Century Literature Reading and Creative Prose Writing 1 hour 45 minutes**

**Section A Reading:** Understanding of one prose extract (about 60-100 lines) of literature from the 20th century assessed through a range of structured questions.

**Section B Writing:** One creative writing task selected from a choice of four titles

**Paper 2 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Non-Fiction Reading and Transactional / Persuasive Writing 1 hour 45 minutes**

**Section A Reading:** Understanding of two extracts (about 900-1200 words in total) of high-quality non-fiction writing, one from the 19th century, the other from the 21st century, assessed through a range of structured questions.

**Section B Writing:** Two compulsory transactional / persuasive writing tasks.

In addition, there is a filmed Speaking and Listening Assessment.

## ENGLISH LITERATURE, AQA

English Literature allows you to explore a diverse range of imaginative texts from a personal perspective. There are two examinations:

**Paper 1: *Shakespeare and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Novel*. Exam 1 hour 45 minutes**

**Section A *Shakespeare*:** students answer one question on “Romeo and Juliet”. They write in detail about an extract from “Romeo and Juliet” and about the play as a whole.

**Section B *The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Novel*:** students answer one question on “The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde” or “A Christmas Carol”. They write in detail about an extract from the novel and about the novel as a whole.

**Paper 2: *Modern Texts and Poetry*. Exam 2 hours 15 minutes**

**Section A *Modern Texts*:** Students answer one essay question on “An Inspector Calls”.

**Section B *Poetry*:** Students answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and other poem from the AQA Poetry Anthology, “Worlds and Lives” section.

**Section C *Unseen Poetry*:** Students answer one question on an unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

## MATHEMATICS, EDEXCEL/OCR

Mathematics is a core subject which means that all girls must study the subject to GCSE level.

Your daughter began her GCSE in September of Upper 4 and is already part way through the course. This year focuses on reviewing and mastering Key Stage 3 skills in some units to allow for quick progress through the remaining topics during Lower 5 and Upper 5.

The course is examined in two tiers, with grades 1 to 5 being available for the Foundation tier and grades 4 to 9 available in the Higher tier. Girls who sit the Foundation paper will follow the OCR syllabus and those who sit the Higher papers will use Edexcel.

Girls in Set 1 will be entered for the Higher tier while those in Set 2 will be entered for Foundation. With this cohort the aim is for Set 2 to sit their Foundation GCSE at the end of Lower 5 and then spend Upper 5 studying Higher, to enable them to sit that exam at the end of Upper 5 and attempt to achieve a higher grade.

All pupils nationally are obliged to continue studying Mathematics until they achieve a grade 4 at GCSE or finish Upper 6.

The Maths GCSE course covers the following areas of Mathematics with different emphasis at Foundation and Higher:

	Foundation	Higher
Number	25%	15%
Algebra	20%	30%
Ratio, proportion and rates of change	25%	20%
Geometry and Measures	15%	20%
Probability and Statistics	15%	15%

There is also a great emphasis on applying Mathematics in different contexts and solving problems, with 60% of the Higher tier marks dedicated to such questions.

The course is examined in three written papers each lasting 1 hour 30 minutes. Two papers use a calculator and one does not.

At Westfield we develop girls' abilities in all important areas of Mathematical thinking. We start with understanding of Mathematical concepts and fluency in the Mathematical skills of each topic before moving on to develop girls' ability to solve more advanced problems on the topic. We aim to develop competent Mathematicians who can apply their skills to a wide variety of problems. As we progress through the GCSE course, problem solving questions involve lots of different aspects of previous learning and challenge the girls to use the key skills in unexpected ways.

## FURTHER MATHEMATICS, AQA

We offer an additional AQA Level 2 in Further Maths to our most able GCSE Maths students. This is equivalent to an additional GCSE qualification and is in addition to your other chosen options.

The course is designed to stretch and challenge high achieving mathematicians who are expected to achieve the top grades (7-9) in GCSE Mathematics and are considering progressing to A-level Mathematics and perhaps also Further Mathematics.

The content assumes prior knowledge of the regular Maths GCSE Programme of Study and covers the areas of algebra and geometry, which are crucial to further study in the subject, in greater depth and breadth. The qualification places an emphasis on higher order technical proficiency, rigorous argument and problem solving skills. It also gives an introduction to calculus and matrices and develops further skills in trigonometry, functions and graphs. At the end of the course pupils will take two exam papers and their grade will be based on their performance in these.

The advantages to the pupils taking part are:

- They gain an additional level qualification at the end of year 11 – grades available are 4-9
- They are more likely to gain a top grade in their standard GCSE due to crossover topics
- They have access to small group lessons designed to boost their confidence
- They will be better prepared for A-level Maths and will transition more easily from GCSE to A-level study

### **How the course is delivered:**

The course is taught after school, outside normal curriculum time, and the emphasis is on independent learning supported by a structured programme of lessons and assessments. Lessons will last approximately one hour, and take place each week on Tuesdays after school. There may be students from other local schools in the class as part of the STEM outreach project. The course will be taught by Mrs Marshall.

### **How to sign up for the course:**

It is not necessary to choose Further Maths GCSE as one of your options. Because the course is taught after school outside normal lesson times, it is an 'extra' GCSE. Pupils who we believe have the potential to do well in the qualification will be offered the opportunity to take part during their Lower 5 year. Lessons will start in the spring term of Lower 5 and will continue throughout Upper 5. If you are interested, talk to your Maths teacher about it; they will give you further information and tell you whether they think you would be a good candidate for the course.

## SCIENCE

In line with the National Curriculum, everyone must have a broad education in Science and study all three subject areas. The depth in which the subjects are studied will depend upon the course taken.

The courses available are:

**Combined Science:** where all three Science subject areas are studied but in less breadth. This course will provide you with two GCSEs in Science.

Assessment will take the form of six externally set, written examinations: two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics. Each of the papers is 1 hour 15 minutes long and will be a mixture of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions. Students will sit all their examinations at the end of the course.

Practical work: There are 16 practical activities that must be carried out by all students taking GCSE Combined Science. Questions in the written exams will draw on the knowledge and understanding students have gained by carrying out these practical activities. These questions will count for at least 15% of the overall marks for the qualification. Other practical activities not directly examined on the GCSE papers will be carried out throughout the course.

**Separate Sciences:** where Biology, Chemistry and Physics are taken as three individual GCSE subjects. This course provides a firm foundation for you to study one or more of the Sciences at A level.

Assessment will take the form of two externally set, written examinations in each subject, both of 1 hour 45 minutes. There will be a mixture of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions.

Practical work: There are eight practical activities that must be carried out in each of the three Science subjects. Questions in the written exams will draw on the knowledge and understanding students have gained by carrying out these practical activities. These questions will count for at least 15% of the overall marks for the qualification. Other practical activities not directly examined on the GCSE papers will be carried out throughout the course.

If you choose separate Sciences this will count as one of your option subjects.



## COMBINED SCIENCE, AQA

This course has been developed to inspire and challenge students of all abilities and aspirations. All three Science subjects are studied as described in Triple Science, with some extended content reduced. This course will provide you with two overall GCSE grades in Science from studying the three subjects.

### Subject content:

#### Biology

1. Cell biology
2. Organisation
3. Infection and response
4. Bioenergetics
5. Homeostasis and response
6. Inheritance, variation and evolution
7. Ecology

#### Chemistry

8. Atomic structure and the periodic table
9. Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
10. Quantitative chemistry
11. Chemical changes
12. Energy changes
13. The rate and extent of chemical change
14. Organic chemistry
15. Chemical analysis
16. Chemistry of the atmosphere
17. Using resources

#### Physics

18. Forces
19. Energy
20. Waves
21. Electricity
22. Magnetism and electromagnetism
23. Particle model of matter
24. Atomic structure

For further details of the content of these topics, see the descriptors on the following pages.

### SEPARATE SCIENCE COURSE CONTENT:

## BIOLOGY, AQA

This course provides an ideal foundation for those wanting to go on to study Biology at A level. You will develop a clear understanding of the key areas of Biology and develop your practical skills, by carrying out a wide range of investigations. The impact of Biology on society is also considered.

### Subject content:

1. Cell biology - we explore how structural differences between types of cells enables them to perform specific functions within the organism.

2. Organisation - we will learn about the human digestive system, and how the plant's transport system is dependent on environmental conditions to ensure that leaf cells are provided with the water and carbon dioxide that they need for photosynthesis.
3. Infection and response - we will explore how we can avoid diseases by reducing contact with them, and how our immune system is triggered to destroy the pathogen and prevent disease. We also look at the use of antibiotics and the problems caused by resistance to them.
4. Bioenergetics – we will explore how plants harness the Sun's energy in photosynthesis to make food. Both animals and plants use the oxygen released to oxidise food in a process called aerobic respiration which transfers the energy that the organism needs to perform its functions. We also study exercise and anaerobic respiration.
5. Homeostasis and response - we will explore the structure and function of the nervous system and how it can bring about fast responses. We will also explore the hormonal system which usually brings about much slower internal changes.
6. Inheritance, variation and evolution - we will study genetics and the implications of sexual reproduction on genetic makeup. We also look at the consequences of positive gene mutations and how these can lead to evolution by Natural Selection. We look at genetic engineering; including how in spite of the huge potential benefits that this technology can offer, genetic modification still remains highly controversial.
7. Ecology - we will explore how humans are threatening biodiversity as well as the natural systems that support it. We will also consider some actions we need to take to ensure our future health, prosperity and well-being.

## CHEMISTRY, AQA

This course provides an ideal foundation for those wanting to go on to study Chemistry at A level. You will develop a clear understanding of the key areas of Chemistry and develop your practical skills, by carrying out a wide range of investigations.

Subject content:

1. Atomic Structure & the Periodic Table – we look at the subatomic particles that make up the atoms of different elements, and how these elements are then organised in the periodic table.
2. Bonding, Structure, and the properties of matter – we look at three types of bonding and how the type of bonding in elements and compounds affects their properties.
3. Quantitative Chemistry – we look at how we use the principle behind the conservation of mass and balanced equations to work out the mass of reactants and products in chemical reactions.
4. Chemical changes – we look at how certain chemicals behave in chemical reactions and how we can spot patterns to help us make predictions about how we think similar chemicals might behave.
5. Energy changes – we look at how some reactions release energy and others absorb it from the surroundings and how we can apply this knowledge to everyday applications.
6. The rate and extent of chemical change – we look at how certain factors affect the speed to which a chemical reaction will take place.

7. Organic Chemistry – this topic looks at the chemistry involving many carbon compounds and the importance of fossil fuels as an energy resource.
8. Chemical Analysis – this topic looks at a range of techniques used to analyse chemicals for example in the identification of unknown compounds.
9. Chemistry of the Atmosphere – we look at how the industrialisation of the human population has impacted on climate and is changing weather patterns all over the world.
10. Using resources – we look at chemists are looking to minimise the use of limited resources, energy consumption and waste.

## PHYSICS, AQA

This course provides an ideal foundation for those wanting to go on to study Physics at A level. You will develop a clear understanding of the key areas of Physics and develop your practical skills, by carrying out a wide range of investigations.

### Subject content:

1. Energy - The concept of energy is the most important idea in Physics. All types of energy and the devices that transform it from one type to another are considered.
2. Electricity - The basics of electrical circuits and mains electricity are considered as well as some more advanced circuit components that can be used to control circuits.
3. Particle model of matter - The particle model of solids, liquids and gases should already be familiar. This is extended to discuss how materials change when heated or cooled.
4. Atomic structure - The details of the structure of the atom and how our understanding of this has developed over the years is considered, as well as radioactivity and its uses and a discussion of nuclear fission and fusion.
5. Forces - Understanding how forces work together is essential to our understanding of the world. The concepts of resultant force, gravity, levers, gears and elasticity are all covered. Newton's Laws and motion are also featured.
6. Waves - Waves transfer energy and information from one place to another. The wide and varied uses of the electromagnetic spectrum as well as the basics of wave propagation are all featured.
7. Magnetism and electromagnetism - The understanding of electromagnetism is fundamental to the understanding of the universe. From electromagnets to how a generator actually works to make electricity will be discussed.
8. Space physics - The life cycle of stars, the big bang and satellites are covered in this topic covering the big questions about our Universe and how it came to be.

# OPTION SUBJECTS

# **LANGUAGES:**

**French**

**Spanish**

### **Why Learn a Modern Foreign Language?**

Studying a GCSE in either French or Spanish enables students of all abilities to develop their French/Spanish language skills to maximise their potential, equipping them with the knowledge to understand and communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence. As a result, here at Westfield, we build sequentially on the foundation blocks established in KS3; systematically reviewing the fundamentals to ensure that all students can acquire the intended knowledge and skills, understand the sophisticated nuances of the language and be successful. Moreover, the range of topics on which we focus, will inspire the student's interest in French or Spanish culture and French and Spanish speaking countries. Students study the following six broad thematic contexts in depth to provide a focus for the teaching and learning of the vocabulary and grammar over the course of the two years:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and tourism

All the vocabulary taught will be used fluidly across these thematic contexts. Within the thematic contexts, students will use vocabulary and grammar to listen to, read, speak and write about the following subjects: family & friends, relationships & equality, physical well-being, mental well-being, food and drink, sports, places in town, shopping, transport, the natural world, environmental issues, social media and gaming, future opportunities (e.g. work, travel), school, music, TV and film, accommodation and tourist attractions. We follow the same Edexcel specification in both French and Spanish.

### **Future Learning Pathways**

A Level French or Spanish can lead to study at Degree Level BA and MA. Students can combine French/Spanish with a variety of subjects to enhance the learning experience and job opportunities.

### **Where can the study of a language take me?**

Studying a language will add an international dimension to your GCSE subjects. This means that students will create greater opportunities to work abroad, or for companies in the UK that have international links. Many employers look for people who speak a foreign language as this demonstrates your skills to communicate. You will learn about the countries where French or Spanish is spoken. Additionally, you will learn many skills which are useful in a wide range of future careers, such as the ability to communicate clearly, being confident about speaking in public and using problem-solving strategies.

The ability to speak one or more languages enables the learner to experience an endless array of new cultures from across the world and harness new skills that are valuable to the development of future career opportunities in a variety of sectors including the arts, finance, business, education, engineering, government, interpreting, law, the media, manufacturing, marketing, retail, teaching, translation and tourism.

### **Assessment**

At the end of the course, students will sit four papers to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding of the foreign language. The examinations will assess students in all four skills areas (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and take place at the end of Upper 5. Each assessment is worth 25%. There are two tiers available: Higher (awarding grades 9-3) and Foundation (awarding grades 5-1). Students have the choice of either sitting the Foundation or Higher Papers.

1. Speaking in the Target Language including Reading aloud, Role Play, Discussion of a Photo Card and a broader Conversation
2. Listening for understanding and a Dictation where the student transcribes what is said
3. Reading & Understanding and Translation into English
4. Writing and Translation into French/Spanish

Whichever language you study, you will be taught in a lively, stimulating, multi-media way to allow you to develop your skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. We encourage you to develop at your own speed and achieve your potential. You will have access to a language learning website, approved by the Edexcel examination board and this can be used at home and in school. It offers a wealth of videos, grammar exercises and games to enhance your learning.

**HUMANITIES:**  
**Geography**  
**History**  
**Religion, Philosophy &**  
**Ethics**  
**Business Studies**



In a constantly changing world, Geography allows you to understand the causes and impacts of those changes and look for ways to make the planet and its people healthier and more sustainable.

There are three components, all examined at the end of the course:

**Component 1: Global Geographical Issues (37.5%)**

This component is global in scale

- Topic 1: Hazardous Earth – the causes and consequences of earthquake and volcanic hazards, plus major weather hazards like tropical storms, hurricanes and drought.
- Topic 2: Development dynamics – considering why some parts of the world are wealthy and developed but other areas remain poor with issues of low quality housing and low food supply.
- Topic 3: Challenges of an urbanising world – more people live in cities than in the countryside today, and this topic looks at the advantages and disadvantages of an urban lifestyle in different parts of the world.

**Component 2: UK Geographical Issues (37.5%)**

This component focusses on the physical and human Geography of the UK

- Topic 4: The UK's evolving physical landscape – including sub-topics 4A: Coastal change and conflict and 4B: River processes and pressures.
- Topic 5: The UK's evolving human landscape – including investigating UK cities, rural areas and the economy of the UK.
- Topic 6: Geographical investigations – including one physical and human geography fieldwork investigation

**Component 3: People and Environment Issues – Making Geographical Decisions (25%)**

- Topic 7: People and the biosphere – how humans use and conserve the natural environment around them.
- Topic 8: Forests under threat – the problems facing tropical forests and forests in cold, high latitude places like Canada and Russia
- Topic 9: Consuming energy resources – the supply of energy from fossil fuels and renewable sources and the impacts of using energy on people and the environment.

How will I be assessed?

Each of the components has an exam. There are short and longer questions on each exam paper.

Component three includes a Decision Making Exercise based on a booklet of resources like maps, graphs, diagrams and tables.

Is it the right subject for me? Ask yourself, do I want to:

- Learn about and understand the world I live in, both in the UK and across the whole world?
- Develop skills that can help me in other subjects and in employment, such as ICT, research, interpreting information and constructing arguments?
- Complete practical fieldwork outside the classroom?
- Learn how to work in a team with other students?
- Learn by investigation and considering different viewpoints, and making your own judgements?
- Enjoy using a variety of different resources and sources of evidence, including videos, maps, images, cartoons, internet sources and books?

Geography is a well-respected and useful qualification for many careers as it is a quantitative humanities subject.

The aim of the course is to help the girls make sense of the world around them and looks at how specific sites and places have affected, and been affected by, historical developments. It also includes a study of the historic environment in the British Depth study.

The GCSE History content comprises the following elements:

- one period study
- one thematic study
- one wider world depth study
- one British depth study including the historic environment.

Understanding the Modern World

- Section A: Period studies: Germany, 1890–1945: Democracy and dictatorship
- Section B: Wider world depth studies: Conflict and tension, 1918–1939

Shaping the Nation

- Section A: Thematic studies: Britain: Health and the people: c1000 to the present day
- Section B: British depth studies including the historic environment: Elizabethan England, c1568–1603

The girls will sit all their exams at the end of the course. There is no coursework and it is 100% external assessment.

Paper 1 – Understanding the Modern World

How it is assessed:

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 50% of GCSE

Paper 2 – Shaping the Nation

How it is assessed:

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 50% of GCSE

*"The unexamined life is not worth living"*  
Socrates

### ***The Course***

Over two years, you will explore three exciting areas:

- 1) Christian Beliefs and Practices: Explore what Christianity is all about and how it shapes lives today
- 2) Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies in the Modern World: Debate big issues such as relationships, life and death, good and evil, and human rights
- 3) A World Faith: Buddhism or Islam: The choice is yours, based on what interests you most.

After a quick introduction to Christianity and your chosen world faith, you'll launch into the debates of Area 2 before circling back to connect belief and practice in real-life ways.

No coursework, no problem! Everything is assessed through written exams.

### ***'But I don't want to be a nun...'***

Studying RS doesn't mean signing up for a life of prayer or giving up Netflix. Plenty of people explore religion, philosophy, and ethics without being religious themselves. If you've ever questioned why people act the way they do or you enjoy debating the big questions, this course is for you.

### ***Why GCSE RS Is More Than Just Another Subject***

RS doesn't pretend to have all the answers, you get to shape the discussion. Ever wondered:

- What makes a good relationship?
- What happens when we die (if anything)?
- Why is life so unfair, and what can we do about it?

This course is all about tackling these universal questions while learning to express yourself clearly in conversation, debates, and writing. You'll develop critical thinking skills that'll set you up for life, whether taking exams or making big decisions as an adult.

### ***'I Want to Take Another Humanities Subject Instead...'***

RS is 100% part of the Humanities options at Westfield. We give RS the spotlight it deserves, because its content is fascinating, and the skills you gain are invaluable.

Whether you are aiming to boost your debating skills, explore life's big questions, or just try something a bit different, RS is a subject unlike any other.

Cambridge Nationals are a vocational alternative to GCSEs, taking a more engaging, practical approach to learning and assessment. This course provides students with applied knowledge and practical skills in enterprise and marketing. It is designed with both practical and theoretical elements, which will prepare students for further study of qualifications in business, enterprise or marketing. For example, learners may progress onto OCRs Level 3 Cambridge Technicals in Business, or other A-Levels in related subjects.

Assessment and learning takes place throughout the course with students gaining knowledge of their progress with a greater chance of success. Assignments are assessed internally and the girls may seek guidance whilst compiling their portfolio of evidence. In addition, there is one examined unit. This course is suitable for a range of learning styles.

#### Unit 1: Enterprise and Marketing Concepts

This unit will cover the key business concepts as well as assessing marketing, finance and the impact of the external environment on the setting up and running of a business. This is assessed externally by an examination that students will sit at the end of Upper 5. This will account for up to 40% of the overall qualification.

#### Unit 2: Design a Business Proposal

This unit takes students through the process of designing, and marketing a business idea. They will have to carry out research and put together a business plan for a particular business targeting a particular type of customer. This unit is assessed internally through a piece of coursework that is set by the exam board. This will account for up to 30% of the overall qualification.

#### Unit 3: Market and Pitch a Business Proposal

This involves students pitching their product design and marketing ideas, in a format similar to “Dragon’s den”. This unit is assessed internally by a piece of coursework that is set by the exam board and will account for up to 30% of the overall qualification.

#### Style of learning

A variety of teaching methods are used throughout the course, to ensure that all students take an active part in lessons. As well as formal teaching, we use video clips to look at real world businesses. Students will undertake their own research to complete projects. Homework will take many forms, such as research, answering exam style questions, producing business reports, reading activities, or working on their coursework.

#### Progression

Business Studies is an ideal qualification for any career. Everyone works for some form of business! This qualification could provide a starting point for a route into employment in many of the diverse areas of business, including roles in specialist areas such as marketing, finance, customer service or human resources in large businesses, or a more generic role in a small, local business.

# **PRACTICAL SUBJECTS:**

## **ART AND DESIGN:**

**Fine Art**

**Graphics**

**Textiles**

**COMPUTING: Creative I-Media**

**DRAMA**

**FOOD PREPARATION & NUTRITION**

**MUSIC**

**PE**

We offer Art and Design GCSE with three different specialisms:

### FINE ART, AQA

Fine Art GCSE is an exciting course which develops the techniques and working methods used by professional artists. The course allows a wide variety of materials to be used in the fields of painting, drawing, sculpture, textiles and print making.

Art from all periods and places can be called upon to be discussed as starting points for projects and you are encouraged to develop your art vocabulary with which to analyse and extend your projects.

Visits will be made to gallery exhibitions and museums, along with workshop visits, to develop skills such as printmaking and 3D design. On-line resources will help support knowledge and understanding. You will be expected to sketch, research and experiment for your projects in the creative journey you make.

The Fine Art GCSE requires the completion of:

- **Component 1**

A portfolio of work, broken down into two, three or four coursework projects as well as life drawing and printmaking. Each unit will consist of several pieces of work eg sketches, drawings and paintings as a starting point for perhaps painting, sculpture or printing work. This accounts for 60% of the total assessment.

- **Component 2**

An externally set task will be provided by the examination board and you will be required to develop this into a project. This accounts for 40% of the total assessment. The Exam project is assessed with the same objectives as the coursework.

Pupils will be expected to exhibit their coursework and controlled test at the end of the two-year course. This is in the form of a display or exhibition with final pieces presented alongside preparatory work and sketchbooks.

The course is a fantastic opportunity to develop and refine creative skills. It also gives the student an opportunity to explore independently selected points of inspiration, and express themselves in a personal way.

### GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION, AQA

The Graphics course is intended for those interested in Art as a form of graphic communication and its application to advertising, illustration and the direct promotion of ideas and information. Graphics pupils will experience video and animation, package design, poster and advertising, letterforms, signs and symbols, illustration, book jacket design, computer graphics and fashion design. It is expected that every pupil will develop an exciting and comprehensive portfolio of work.

The portfolio unit will be divided into smaller, self contained projects which will take the set brief as its starting point. A typical brief will encourage pupils to develop research skills and to 'rough out' original ideas of their own before producing a sensitive and well-presented concept. With increased confidence pupils will be encouraged to explore areas of personal interest.

Practical exercises involving photography and graphic techniques also contribute to the portfolio unit and a comparative study of styles and media employed in industry will be combined with your own work. On-line resources will help support knowledge and understanding.

GCSE Graphics will form a solid foundation for those wishing to pursue their design studies further at A level. The course is essential for those pupils considering a career in any of the design related fields including Graphic Design, Advertising, Gaming Design, Fashion Design, Illustration, Industrial Design, Film and Animation.

The Graphics GCSE requires the completion of:

- **Component 1**  
A portfolio of work reflecting a choice of practical units of coursework covering a variety of working methods and materials. 60% of total assessment.
- **Component 2**  
An externally set task (similar to a unit of work but without help from the class teacher). A selection of starting points will be provided and you will be required to develop this into a project. 40% of total assessment.

Pupils will be expected to exhibit their coursework and controlled test at the end of the two-year course. This is in the form of a display or exhibition with final pieces presented alongside preparatory work. The course is a fantastic opportunity to develop and refine design skills with an emphasis on creative practical application.

## TEXTILES DESIGN, AQA

AQA Textile Design is a unique and dynamic, creatively designed course which is delivered through an engaging and skill building curriculum. Textile and Fashion Design gives students the opportunity and freedom to explore their ideas and develop their own individual artistic style demonstrated through their sketchbook and final 3D outcomes. Not only is this course enjoyable and relevant in pursuit of an artistic or designer career path but it also equips students with life skills and allows them to look at problem solving and any project presented to them with a creative outlook which is an attractive skill set for university and employers.

### Assessment:

#### Component 1: Coursework Portfolio

In order to complete the course, you must produce a Portfolio of work to display all of the coursework completed across the 2 years. This Portfolio will count towards 60% of your final mark and is internally set, internally marked and externally moderated.

#### Component 2: Externally Set Assignment

In the Spring Term of Upper 5, you will receive the externally set theme for your practical timed exam. This is completed and presented in a similar way as component 1 but in exam conditions. You will be given time to develop your ideas within school in preparation for your practical assessment. This will be followed by the production of your final outcome within a supervised 10-hour timed period. This unit counts towards 40% of your final mark and is externally set, internally marked and externally moderated.

### Lower 5

You are introduced to the subject through a series of skill building tasks such as the A-Z of the Sewing Machine, a variety of fabric manipulation, dyeing and printing techniques as well as presentation and sketchbook skills. This will be filtered into the first Minor Project with a centre guided theme and practical outcome of either fashion or interior design. Major Project is introduced in the summer term and with that comes a lot more independence and flexibility with processes and outcome. This project will be continued in the second year of the course, again with a centre guided theme for example 'Natural Forms'

## Upper 5

Major project is continued and completed in the first academic term. Exam theme is released by AQA in January and preparatory work begins, prior to practical assessment, in the Spring Term. The course is usually completed by the end of May.

## Post 16 Progression

The course follows on perfectly to A-Level Art & Design within the chosen discipline of Textile Design which is also offered at Westfield Sixth form.

## COMPUTING: Creative iMedia

### What is Creative iMedia?

Are you good at using software to develop products such as movies, images and multimedia products? Do you enjoy creating digital products to meet a particular purpose and target audience? Are you interested in a career in app design, games or web development? If so, this may be the course for you! The Cambridge National in Creative iMedia is a course for those with a creative mind. You'll be asked to plan, design, develop and review products using a range of software.

### Why study Creative iMedia?

Creative iMedia equips pupils to use IT and creativity to understand and change the world. The IT and Digital Literacy skills involved in Creative iMedia have deep links with mathematics, science, and design and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems. One of the main aspects of Creative iMedia is how to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of digital media including factors that influence product design, use of media codes and conventions, pre-production planning techniques, legal issues and creation/publishing/distribution considerations.

Building on this knowledge and understanding, pupils are equipped to use IT to create digital graphics and a digital artefact. The Creative iMedia curriculum ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, express themselves and develop their ideas through Information Technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

## COURSE STRUCTURE

### Cambridge Nationals Creative iMedia: 3 units over 2 years:

**1. Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry: (Exam - 40%);**

In this unit you will learn about the sectors, products and job roles that form the media industry. You will learn the legal and ethical issues considered and the processes used to plan and create digital media products. You will learn how media codes are used within the creation of media products to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences.

**2. Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics: (Coursework - 25%)**

In this unit you will learn how to develop brands and visual identities for clients.

You will also learn to apply the concepts of graphic design to create original digital graphics which incorporate your visual identity to engage a target audience.

You will also learn a range of design skills using Canva, Affinity Designer and other digital graphic applications

**3. Unit R097: Interactive digital media: (Coursework - 35%)**

In this unit you will learn to design and create interactive digital media products for chosen platforms.

Interactive digital media products are found across the media industry, in games, websites and apps, and learning. You will learn to select, edit and repurpose multimedia content of different kinds and create the interactive elements necessary for an effective user experience.



**Assessment:** The course is vocational in nature and is assessed as 60% coursework and 40% exam. Grades are based on assessment across all three units. Students will be awarded a grade from Pass at Level 1 through to Distinction\* at level 2.

## DRAMA, AQA

GCSE Drama enables you to do what all Drama students love to do: participate in performance! Beyond that, however, you will also watch and evaluate live theatre performances, study set plays and expand your knowledge and understanding of the theatre. The course is a great balance of theory and practical work, which enables you to hone your performance skills and develop your analytical abilities through essay writing.

The course is made up of:

- **Component 1: Understanding Drama (40%)**  
Here, you will answer multiple choice questions about theatre terminology, analyse a play we have studied and write about a theatre performance we have attended. This is externally assessed.
- **Component 2: Devising Drama (40%)**  
For this section of the course, you will create your own piece of Drama and document the journey in a devising log as well as analysing and evaluating your own performance. This is internally assessed.
- **Component 3: Texts in practice (20%)**  
The final component requires you to perform two extracts from a play you have chosen. This is externally assessed.

Wherever possible, you are given the choice of what you want to do, so each year the course is tailored to each class and, as far as possible, each individual within the class. This means that as well as doing a subject you love, you can follow and further develop your passions within Drama too.

Beyond the specification, GCSE Drama also enables you to develop your confidence, work as a member of a team, hone your listening and communication skills and become adaptable. The course does require a great deal of commitment, including additional rehearsals, group work and evening theatre visits, and, as such, should only be taken by those with an excellent track record of attendance. It is, however, a lot of fun with a great track record for results; in 2024 the subject had 100% 9-4 pass rate.

## FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION, AQA

During the last three years you have acquired many practical skills. GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition will enable you to use these skills and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating into a wide range of activities throughout the two years.

### **Assessment:**

There is a final written paper (1 hour 45 minutes) worth 50% of the final GCSE mark and there are two controlled assessment tasks carrying the remaining 50%. The first task is carried out at the beginning of Upper 5 and comprises of a food investigation into the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients with photographic evidence being required on practical work carried out. The second task is completed after Christmas in Upper 5 and is a food preparation assessment that involves a written report, recipe testing and then producing a three course menu within a three hour controlled environment.

The subject content is taught under five sections.

- *Food, nutrition and health*

- *Food science*
- *Food safety*
- *Food choice*
- *Food provenance*

Practical work incorporates twelve skill groups that have been integrated throughout the specification:

1. General practical skills e.g. weighing and measuring, preparation of equipment and ingredients, monitoring cooking times, testing to see whether a food item is cooked, judge how to modify taste and texture.
2. Knife skills for both fruit and vegetables and meat and fish.
3. Preparing fruit and vegetables in different ways e.g. mashing, roasting, grilling, frying etc.
4. Use of the cooker – both the grill and oven.
5. Use a range of equipment e.g. electric whisk, blender, food processor, etc.
6. Practise different cooking methods e.g. baking, boiling, steaming, casseroling, blanching, poaching, frying.
7. Prepare, combine and shape a variety of foods e.g. meatballs, burgers, falafels.
8. Sauce making e.g. starch based, reductions and emulsions.
9. Tenderise and marinate e.g. meat, fish.
10. Prepare a dough – bread, pastry and pasta.
11. Utilise different raising agents when cooking e.g. steam, air, chemical.
12. Setting mixtures through use of gelatine and other protein sources e.g. custard, mousse.

This course is not for those wanting to make cakes all the time – we will cook each week and generally will alternate sweet and savoury dishes as you build up your repertoire. Theory is detailed and practical lessons will often reflect what is being taught in the classroom. So, if you're passionate about food – then this is a must!

## MUSIC, EDUQAS

GCSE Music is an option for any girl who has enjoyed the subject at Key Stage 3 and shown musical potential and interest. You should be receiving vocal or instrumental lessons or be willing to start to support your performance. The standard required to pass the performance exam in Upper 5 is Grade 3, but you are not required to sit any exams. You should have basic understanding of music notation, but entry requirements are flexible and support is provided. Students should be willing to dedicate time to practising their instruments as well as attending extra- curricular music activities.

EDUQAS GCSE Music is an exciting and challenging subject. The diverse music studied requires enthusiasm, creativity and imagination.

During **Lower 5**, the GCSE course focuses on:

- Preparing the free choice composition
- Increasing skill and technique through composition assignments in a range of styles
- Choosing and developing performance pieces
- Developing general musicianship skills and knowledge through music theory
- Exploring the musical styles in the set works and related examples

During **Upper 5**, the GCSE course focuses on:

- Preparing and recording a solo and an ensemble performance
- Composing to a brief set by the exam board and finalising the free composition
- Developing general musicianship skills and knowledge in preparation for the listening examination

The **EDUQAS Syllabus** follows this marking criterion:

- **Performing (Solo and Ensemble Recording) 30%**

- **Composing (Two pieces of coursework) 30%**
- **Listening and appraising (Examination of Set Works) 40%**

### **Component 1: Performing**

A minimum of two pieces, lasting a total of 4 minutes, recorded and teacher assessed. One piece must be an ensemble lasting at least one minute and one piece should be linked to an area of study. Grade 3 standard.

### **Component 2: Composition**

Two composition pieces, one in response to a brief set by EDUQAS in Year 11 and a free piece started in Year 10. These are done electronically and teacher assessed.

### **Component 3: Appraising**

Listening examination- 8 questions with 2 questions on each area of study:

- **Musical forms and devices** (Western Classical Tradition 1650-1910) J S Bach: Badinerie from Orchestral Suite No 2 (1738-1939)
- **Music for ensemble** Suggested genres, no set works
- **Film music** Suggested styles, no set works
- **Popular music** Toto: Africa

Please speak to Miss Master if you are interested in GCSE Music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION, OCR**

Physical Education GCSE is a good choice for anyone with all round ability in sport who is not only interested in taking part but also in learning about and discussing the issues surrounding sport on all levels. The specification gives students the opportunity to link theory to practical performance.

GCSE PE consists of 60% theory and 40% practical. The practical aspects are assessed continuously and the theoretical aspect will be assessed by two 1 hour examinations.

### **Practical**

You will be assessed in three activities. One must be an 'individual' sport the second a 'team' sport and the third can be either. This section has an Analysing and Evaluating Performance task. There is a wide variety of sports available to be assessed in. For a detailed list please visit <https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/234827-guide-to-non-exam-assessment-gcse.pdf>, page 16 and 17 (team activities) and pages 64 and 65 (individual activities).

### **Theory**

There are two examination papers which are in three parts with multiple choice questions, short answer questions and scenario questions. The theoretical areas covered include:

- 1.1 Applied Anatomy and Physiology
- 1.2 Physical Training
- 2.1 Socio-cultural Influences
- 2.2 Sports Psychology
- 2.3 Health, Fitness and Well-being

**ENRICHMENT SUBJECTS:**  
**CAREERS**  
**PSHEE**  
**PE**  
**DUKE OF EDINBURGH**

## CAREERS

In Lower 5 and Upper 5 this area is designed to help you build upon the strengths, weaknesses and the values you have identified when choosing your GCSE subjects. The aim is to lay sound foundations for both your post-16 and Higher Education choices. Pupils will have one careers lesson per fortnight.

Career lessons will allow you to consider the requirements of the world of work and equip you with the skills to make your own career investigations and future applications. You will use a range of careers resources, computer packages and post 16 education guidance to explore possible career paths. The lessons will prepare you for a week's work experience.

In Key Stage 4 you will be asked to complete career questionnaires which will provide you with an objective personal profile highlighting strengths, weaknesses and aptitudes and suggesting possible careers to be considered and explored further. In the Spring Term of Upper 5 you will be given advice and encouragement about AS/A2 level choices and future Higher Education possibilities. You will also be given guidance on Study/Revision skills in preparation for your GCSEs.

## PSHEE

The aims of the course are to give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding to :

- Develop confidence and responsibility and to make the most of their own abilities
- Develop a healthy and safe lifestyle
- Develop good relationships and respect the differences between people
- Understand their role as a citizen and have knowledge of human rights, their own rights, equality and discrimination and make choices that are positive for them
- In Lower 5 and Upper 5 the girls are given a combination of PSHEE and Careers teaching. They may receive a block of PSHEE teaching followed by a block of Careers teaching.

Lower Five topics include:

- Mental health
- Healthy relationships
- Community and careers
- Exploring influence
- Addressing extremism and radicalisation

Upper Five topics include:

- Building for the future
- Communication in relationships
- Financial decision making
- Independence
- Families

In addition to formal lessons, when the situation allows, outside agencies are brought into school to do talks or presentations to cover important topics related to PSHEE and assemblies and wellbeing activities are shared with the girls to enhance their learning and development in lessons.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The aim of Physical Education is to promote all round physical development and health. The objective is to realise the full physical potential of each individual and develop life skills of health related fitness and create opportunities for physical experiment, self expression and communication.

During the Autumn and Spring Terms badminton, netball, football, trampolining, cheerleading, hockey, volleyball, aerobics, circuit training and dance are taught in school. You also have the opportunity to attend several different extra curricular clubs and compete for team positions in different sports. Swimming and cross country are not taught as a whole class activity, but you have the opportunity to take part competitively and represent Westfield in both these areas of Physical Education.

During the Summer Term tennis, athletics, cricket and rounders are taught. Extra coaching is provided in these sports during lunchtimes. Selected girls are entered in various competitions with other schools in the region.

## DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

In Lower 5 you may choose to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award at Bronze level. It is a very worthwhile Award and consists of four sections:

### **Volunteering (minimum of three months)**

The aim of this section is to give service to other people and to the local community. It will give you an opportunity to increase your self-confidence, to accept responsibility, understand your strengths, appreciate other people and their needs and make a personal contribution to the community.

### **Skills (minimum of three months)**

The skills section is about developing personal interests and learning practical skills. It will give you the opportunity to learn something new, get organised, meet new people, try something different, make real progress and have fun.

### **Physical (minimum of three months)**

In this section you take part in a sport or physical activity. It gives opportunities to improve your fitness, meet new challenges, increase your self-confidence and end up with a sense of achievement.

One of the above three sections must be followed for six months.

### **Expedition**

In the expedition section you will plan, prepare for and undertake a two-day backpacking expedition in an unfamiliar environment. With rigorous training, you will become part of a self-reliant team, working together to overcome real challenges. You will have the opportunity to develop teamwork and leadership skills and appreciate the countryside.

On completion of the Bronze Award, participants are presented with a badge and a certificate.