

# Yr9 GCSE PREFERENCES

2022 GCSE COURSE GUIDE

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### **Dear Year 9 Students and Parents/Carers**

Preferences is an important process which we aim to make as smooth as possible, particularly during these unusual times. To help you, this booklet has been produced to promote a discussion between school, parents/carers and students. It has key information about the structure and demands of subjects at GCSE level for you to map out your Year 10 and 11 programme of study. This booklet works in conjunction with the preference videos produced by each subject, that you will view during form time and will be available on the school website from Friday 21<sup>st</sup> January for both parents/carers and any student who missed the showing in form.

The Year 9 Parents Evening on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February is an excellent opportunity for you and your parents/carers to speak to your CORE subject teachers and those teachers of preference subjects that you are interested in taking at GCSE. This conversation with preference subject teachers along with your first Year 9 report of the year will very much support you in deciding if the GCSE is good fit.

So, what will **your** Year 10 and 11 curriculum look like?

**Compulsory subjects:** The following GCSE subjects are compulsory at NDHS: English Language; English Literature; Mathematics; Science (Combined or Triple pathways – the Head of Science will assess which course is appropriate); Religious Education and a Modern Foreign Language. In addition, all students have timetabled CORE Physical Education and PSHEE, which are both non-examined.

**In all cases, the Head of Department will have the final say as to whether their subject is appropriate for you - and you are appropriate for their subject - depending on your attitude to learning and progress in all areas. GCSEs are a step-up – do your homework, use this booklet to check what the subject requirements are and talk to the teachers who teach that subject.**

**Preferences – online:** The school uses an online form which you will be able to access via the school website after the 3<sup>rd</sup> February. You will be asked for your **PARENT'S/CARER'S** email address and **your school** email address. There are **2 blocks** from which to select subjects. Select your **1<sup>st</sup> Preference and a Reserve in each block** and submit the form by **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022**. The online system will send a copy back to the Parent's/Carer's email address – keep it somewhere safe. You may need to check your Junk and Spam mailboxes for your copy.

**Languages:** As Notre Dame is committed to languages, you will continue to study one language at GCSE. However, it is possible to select a second language in the option blocks if you so desire.

On the following page there is some advice and guidance aimed at helping you make your preference choices.

Best wishes

*P Hedges*

Mr P Hedges

Head of Year 9

[phedges@ndhs.org.uk](mailto:phedges@ndhs.org.uk)

## Here are some ideas that might help your thinking:

- Which subjects do you enjoy at school? If you enjoy a subject, it makes it far easier to fully engage in your learning.
- Which subjects are you good at? You want to do as well as you can in your GCSEs, especially if you have aspirations of studying A-levels and going onto university. In addition, when you apply for a job it is highly likely that you will be asked to record your GCSE grades. Therefore, choose subjects that you think you will do well in.
- Do you want to study A-levels? If so, what would you like to study? If these subjects are available at GCSE, it might be wise to select them in order to support your continued study of them at Key Stage 5.
- Do you have any career plans or ambitions to study a certain subject at university? If so, would a particular combination of GCSE subjects support you in realising these ambitions? The following websites might be worth looking at to guide you with this:

<http://russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/school-and-college-in-the-uk/subject-choices-at-school-and-college>

[www.unifrog.org/studen](http://www.unifrog.org/studen)

- You might have a particular interests in a certain part of the curriculum for example the Humanities or the Creatives and therefore might want to choose subjects from that area which complement each other, such as History and Geography or Art and Drama.
- Alternatively you might like variety and want to select subjects from very different parts of the curriculum, in order to have a broader curriculum in KS4.
- A large number of NDHS students enter for the English Baccalaureate each year. This requires students to study English, Maths, Science a Modern Foreign Language and a Humanity. Therefore, each year many students select either History or Geography as one of their preferences (you can do both).

## Don't forget:

Choosing a subject just to be with friends is an *unsound* reason. Friends who choose identical subjects will not necessarily be in the same class. For example, if you choose History in one block, there is no guarantee you will end up in the same class as your friend who also chooses History, because we run several groups in each block. Likewise, avoid choosing a subject based upon who is teaching that subject. We cannot forecast who will be teaching the various groups in the next academic year.

Talk your subject preferences through with your parents and carers. Also, if you are thinking about new subjects, please see the relevant teacher or see the Head of Subject. Full discussion between student, parent/carers, Form Tutor and subject staff will allow you to consider all the advice, and to make an informed decision.

**Please note**, within the Design and Technology subject areas there are what the exam board calls “forbidden combinations”. This means students are not allowed to study the following combinations:

- *Product Design and Fashion & Textiles*
- *Graphics and Fashion & Textiles*
- *Product Design and Graphics*.



- Art & Design
- Business
- Computer Science
- Drama
- English Language
- English Literature
- Fashion & Textile Design
- Food & Nutrition
- French
- Geography
- Graphic Design
- History
- Japanese
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physical Education
- PSHEE
- Product Design
- Religious Studies
- Science
- Spanish

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## ART & DESIGN

Art & Design can offer you the opportunity to use your imagination and to be creative in many different areas. You may wish to be a graphic designer, an architect, a fine artist, a fashion designer, a theatre designer or a sculptor. You may wish to work in television or film, in computer aided design; in fact, in any visually orientated career. If so, Art & Design GCSE would offer you a suitable foundation from which you can move on to further and higher education.

The course will offer you the opportunity to study a wide range of skills and techniques including drawing, painting, collage, print-making and contextual studies. Drawing from observation is an important element of the course and it will help to develop your visual sensitivity, perception and judgement.

### **If you choose this course you will be expected to . . .**

- develop a mature and responsible approach to your work through private study and individual research,
- keep a work journal,
- evaluate your own work and that of others.

### **How is Art & Design taught?**

Pupils work in mixed ability groups. Most work is project based and students are expected to do homework regularly. Supporting studies carried out before the exams are essential.

### **How is it assessed?**

Projects and homework are assessed. The course has 2 components:

- Coursework (60%),
- A set exam piece together with the necessary supporting studies (40%).

### **Cost involved**

Students are expected to have their own range of art materials to enable them to complete various homework tasks set during the course. Funding for equipment is available if necessary, where a student is in receipt of Pupil Premium.

### **What does it lead to?**

A GCSE in Art & Design can lead to A Level Art, Fine Art, Graphic Design, Illustration, Surface Pattern Design, Fashion Design, Textile Design, Art History, Fashion Buying, Landscape Design, Photography, Jewellery Making & Design, Architecture, Industrial Designing, Media Studies, Ceramics, Shop Window Design & Education.



## BUSINESS

Studying Business enables students to understand the decisions and motives of entrepreneurs and business managers. Students will learn the steps and procedures involved in running a business. They will develop and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to contemporary issues in a range of local, national and global contexts.

### Topics studied

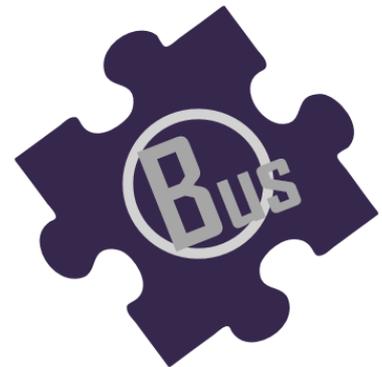
Students will study topics such as Finance, Marketing, Business Economics and Human Resource Management. Students have also had the opportunity to become budding entrepreneurs by turning £10 in to as much profit as they possibly can. The subject also runs an extracurricular lunch club for Year 10 Business students where they get the opportunity to start and run their own business through The Young Enterprise scheme.

### Course Structure

The course consists of two externally examined papers; Theme 1: Investigating small business which is 50% of the qualification and Theme 2: Building a business which is also worth 50% of the qualification. Both papers will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions.

### Theme 1 content overview

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

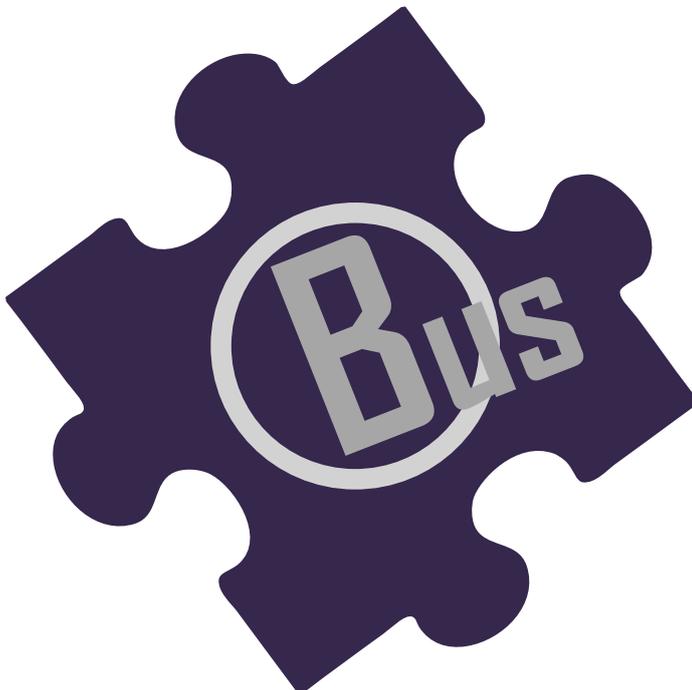


### Theme 2 content overview

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

### What does the course lead to?

Business GCSE links with A Level courses such as Business, Economics, Politics and increasingly Modern Foreign Languages. Business is also an excellent subject to have on a CV, even more so given the current business and economic climate. Students studying this course should have an interest in learning about the world around them and their place in it. The course will require students to solve problems and investigate businesses from a range of different perspectives. Students of Business must have a mature and hardworking attitude in order to pass the course.

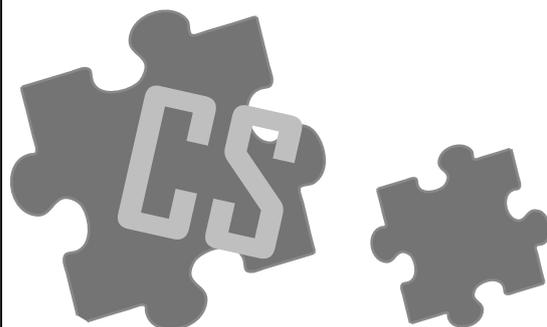


## COMPUTER SCIENCE

GCSE Computer Science gives students a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. It offers an insight into what goes on 'behind the scenes', including computer programming, which many students find fascinating. Computer Science is of enormous importance to the economy, and the role of Computer Science as a discipline itself and as an 'underpinning' subject across science and engineering is growing rapidly. Computer technology continues to advance rapidly and the way that technology is consumed has also been changing at a fast pace over recent years. The growth in the use of mobile devices and web related technologies has exploded, resulting in new challenges for employers and employees. For example, businesses today require an ever-increasing number of technologically aware individuals. This is even more so in the gaming, mobile and web related industries and the course specification has been designed with this in mind.

### Assessment overview

Component	Marks	Duration	Weighting
Computer systems (01)	80	1hr 30mins	50%
Calculators <b>not</b> allowed			
Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (02)	80	1hr 30mins	50%
Calculators <b>not</b> allowed			



### Entry Requirements

Students should have a strong interest in computers, particularly how they work. They should also be keen on learning how to code and create effective applications on different platforms (web, mobile, PC, etc). Students will have the opportunity to use their problem solving skills, develop critical and logical thinking, be able to work independently as well as in a group, and demonstrate commitment towards their work.

### Careers and Future Pathways

Computer Science is useful in the workplace. Pupils can progress to A Level in Computer Science. There are obvious careers, such as system analyst, programming, app inventor, web developer, computer engineer, computer security expert, network administrator and computer technicians.

Computer Science is also one of the highly respected academic subjects in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), which form a good foundation for future academic pathways.



# DRAMA

Drama GCSE builds on the basic skills learned during years 7, 8 and 9, developing a student's ability to use a large range of drama conventions in order to explore topics, issues and play-texts in a creative, imaginative and skilled manner. The course is intellectually challenging; as to work at a high level, students need to be able to demonstrate a sophisticated ability to analyse and evaluate practical work of their own, of their peers and of professional companies. Written analysis is also expected as part of the coursework requirement and final exam so there is emphasis on students having a strong level of written communication alongside their performance skills. The Head of Department will have the final say as to whether a student is suitable to fulfil the written demands alongside the capability to work supportively with others. The course also aims to develop students' confidence, as well as the ability to communicate effectively, using verbal and non-verbal skills, both within practical drama and inter-personally when working in a group.

## How is the subject taught?

The subject is taught in mixed ability groups. Lessons are mostly practical and students work in pairs, in groups and as a whole class. Much of the drama focuses on topics and themes, some of which are suggested by the students, as well as the exploration of scripted drama.

## How is it assessed?

There are three components:

**Component 1:** Devising (worth 40% of the course mark).

Students create and develop a devised group piece from a stimulus.

There are two parts to the assessment:

- 1) A portfolio covering the creating, developing process and evaluation of this process.
- 2) A devised performance.

**Component 2:** Performance from a text (worth 20% of the course mark).

Students will perform in two key extracts from a performance text.

**Component 3:** Practical study and exploration of a performance text. Written exam, 1 hour 30 minutes (worth 40% of the course mark).

- **Section A:** Bringing texts to life. This section consists of one question broken into 5 parts based on an unseen extract from the chosen performance text.
- **Section B:** Live theatre evaluation.

## What does it lead to?

Drama GCSE provides a preparation for the two year A Level Drama and Theatre Studies course, plus other Post-16 Drama and Performing Arts courses. Many employers increasingly value the importance of Drama because of the inter-personal skills it develops.



## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

All students will study the AQA GCSE qualifications in both English Language and English Literature (two separate GCSEs).



### What is English Language?

The study of English Language develops a growing maturity of approach and sophistication of materials in the key areas of reading, writing and oral communication. Students will develop the skills they need to read, understand and analyse a wide range of different fiction and non-fiction texts covering the 19th, 20th and 21st century time periods. Students will also develop the ability to write clearly, coherently and accurately for a range of different audiences and purposes. There is also a continued emphasis on formal speaking and listening skills.

### How is the subject taught?

Students will be largely grouped by ability, and in all groups participate in peer and group activities, completing regular peer and self-assessment activities.

### How is it assessed?

100% Examination

At the end of Year 11 students will sit two exam papers for English Language, totalling 3½ hours of examination. Both exam papers will test reading and writing skills, and students will be expected to respond to unseen texts.

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing (50%)

- Section A: Reading – Students respond to one unseen literature fiction text
- Section B: Writing – Descriptive or narrative writing

Paper 2: Writer's Viewpoints and Perspectives (50%)

- Section A: Reading - Students respond to one unseen non-fiction text and one unseen literary non-fiction text
- Section B: Writing - Writing to present a viewpoint

20% of the total marks will be awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Students will also complete a formal presentation which will be awarded in a separate endorsement.

### What does it lead to?

Many employers require a good pass in GCSE English Language to prove that candidates have a sound level of competence in both speaking and literacy, and it is often specified as a requirement for further education. A good pass in English Language demonstrates that the student has acquired a range of communication skills that would be essential in a wide variety of careers.



## ENGLISH LITERATURE

All students will study the AQA GCSE qualifications in both English Language and English Literature (two separate GCSEs).

### What is English Literature?

The study of English Literature at this level is designed to build on students' experience of the range of reading already acquired. The course involves the study of novels, plays and poetry from a range of historical periods, all originating from the British Isles. Students are encouraged to develop their skills as perceptive and critical readers, and clear, focused writers. Texts are studied from a modern perspective and are also placed within their social and historical contexts.

Throughout the two-year course students will study:

- A 19th Century Novel
- A Collection of Poetry from 1789 onwards (AQA Power and Conflict Anthology)
- A Shakespeare Play
- 20th Century Fiction from the British Isles (Play or Prose)

Students will demonstrate their understanding of all of the texts studied, exploring themes, ideas and the writer's craft (use of language, structure and literary devices).

### How is it assessed?

100% Examination

At the end of Year 11, students will sit two exam papers for English Literature, totalling 4 hours of examination. Both examinations will be 'closed book' assessments meaning that students will not be able to take copies of texts into the exams with them.

#### Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel (40%)

- Section A: Shakespeare
- Section B: 19th Century Novel

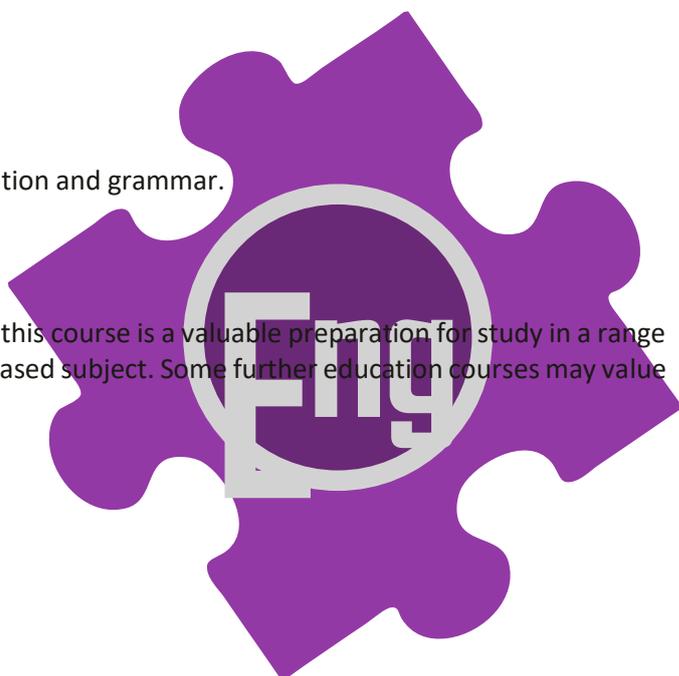
#### Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry (60%)

- Section A: Modern Texts
- Section B: Comparative Poetry
- Section C: Unseen Poetry

5% of the total marks will be awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

### What does it lead to?

In addition to leading to further study in English Literature, this course is a valuable preparation for study in a range of subjects: Humanities, Foreign Languages and any essay based subject. Some further education courses may value or require a good pass in English Literature.



## FASHION & TEXTILE DESIGN

GCSE Design and Technology (Fashion & Textile Design) will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making, and apply technical and practical expertise. Design and making are encouraged so as to prepare candidates for taking higher level courses or for entering the world of work.

Commitment and a passion for the subject are essential to be successful.

In preparation for the course, students will have the opportunity to design and make their own apron; they will learn a range of decorative and pattern cutting techniques to broaden their skill base.

Students will work collaboratively and individually. Collaborative projects include designing and making products for use within the school and external organisations. In the past, these projects have included costumes for the school production and banners advertising the school house system and CAFOD.

### Assessment

#### Written exam: 100 marks – 50% of GCSE

Section A – Core Technical Principals (20 marks)

Section B – Specialist Technical Principals (30 marks)

Section C – Designing and Making Principals (50 marks)

#### Non-exam assessment (NEA): 100 marks – 50% of GCSE

Substantial design and make task – Assessment criteria:

- Investigating
- Designing
- Making
- Analysing and Evaluating

### What does it lead to?

This is a full course GCSE and therefore leads, on a point score basis, to all further education programmes.

Careers in fashion and textiles include; fashion designer, textile designer, fashion illustration, fashion marketing and costume design.

Please note, within the Design and Technology subject areas there are what the exam boards call “forbidden combinations”. This means that students are not allowed to study the following combinations:

- *Product Design with Fashion & Textiles*
- *Graphics with Fashion & Textiles*
- *Product Design with Graphics*



## FOOD & NUTRITION

GCSE Food and Nutrition is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials.

This course enables candidates who enjoyed Food Technology at Key Stage 3 to move easily onto GCSE Food and Nutrition. Many of the experiences in KS3 are both reinforced and extended within this programme.

Commitment and a passion for the subject are essential to be successful.

Upon completion of the course, students will be qualified to go on to further study, or embark on an apprenticeship or full time career in the catering or food industries.

In preparation for the course, students will have the opportunity learn a range of techniques and processes to broaden their skill base. They will work collaboratively and individually. Projects will include designing and making a range of products suitable for a Christmas Market, and designing products to meet specific requirements of clients and consumers.

### Assessment

**Written examination (1 hour and 45 minutes): 100 marks – 50% of GCSE**

**Non-exam assessment (NEA): Two tasks – 50% of GCSE**

- Task 1: Food Investigation – written or electronic report (1,500 – 2,000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation.
- Task 2: Food Preparation Assessment – written or electronic portfolio including photographic evidence.

### What does it lead to?

This is a full course GCSE and therefore leads, on a point score basis, to all further education programmes.

Careers in Food and Nutrition include; food nutritionist, restaurant manager, kitchen manager, food product development and catering.



## FRENCH

Many of you will have already been learning and enjoying French for several years now so you will want to continue your French journey at NDHS! You have already learned a great deal of vocabulary and acquired lots of language skills so you have a head start with GCSE French and it is important to remember that speaking a foreign language will give you a real advantage in today's world, whether you are using it as an employee in the workplace or as a tourist on holiday.

In Year 10 pupils continue to learn through the main skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. You will have the opportunity to develop your knowledge of familiar topics as well as study new ones; media, the environment, the world of work and healthy living are just some of the topics we will be covering throughout the two-year course. You will also have the opportunity to use ICT to help with your language learning, using websites such as *memrise.com* and *linguascope.com* as well as focusing regularly on exam technique and preparation for the final assessments.

### How is it assessed?

Pupils sit final exams in listening (25%), reading (25%), speaking (25%) and writing (25%) at the end of Year 11. The department uses the EDUQAS French GCSE course.

### Why learn French for GCSE?

French is an official language of the European Union and so extremely useful in the business world. Our geographical proximity to France means that many companies have businesses in both countries and therefore need staff who can communicate in both languages. It is a very popular holiday destination too and by no means do all the French speak English!

French is also spoken in many other countries like Canada, Algeria, Togo, the Caribbean and other parts of Europe. French can open up so many opportunities for jobs later on.

But it is not just about French. Learning a language says so much about you: your enthusiasm for different cultures, your dedication to learning new vocabulary, your grammatical skills and your willingness to communicate; so ensure that you have the opportunity to show off your talent and choose to learn more of this beautiful language.

We have successfully led trips to France during the GCSE Course and, depending on the international situation at the time, we hope to offer this excellent opportunity again to practise your language skills and have the opportunity to see more of France.



## GEOGRAPHY

### There has never been a more important time to study Geography

The World **needs** geographers. Faced with climate change, resource depletion, more frequent and severe natural hazards and growing cities, Planet Earth needs people that can interpret and understand the relationships between the human and physical worlds. GCSE Geography explores the challenges faced by human beings and aims to identify solutions for all our futures.

### Why study geography?

Geography is diverse and contemporary and relevant to everything around you. This exciting course examines the battles between man-made and natural worlds. If you currently enjoy geography, have a keen interest in real issues and world events that affect us all then this subject would be an excellent choice.

Geography is hugely valued by employers, colleges and universities as it encourages independent thinking, informed citizens and also develops a broad range of transferable skills such as information analysis and critical evaluation.

### How is the course structured?

100% exam. Three exams all completed at the end of Year 11. You will need to be good at writing and examinations.

**PAPER 1:** Living with the Physical Environment. 1½ hours – 35% of the GCSE.

Topics: *Tectonic Hazards, Climatic Hazards, Climate Change, The Living World (tropical rainforests and hot deserts), Physical Landscapes in the UK (coasts and rivers).*

**PAPER 2:** Challenges in the Human Environment. 1½ hours – 35% of the GCSE.

Topics: *Urban Issues and Challenges (urban change and sustainability), The Changing Economic World (development and the changing UK economy), The Challenge of Resource Management (food, water and energy)*

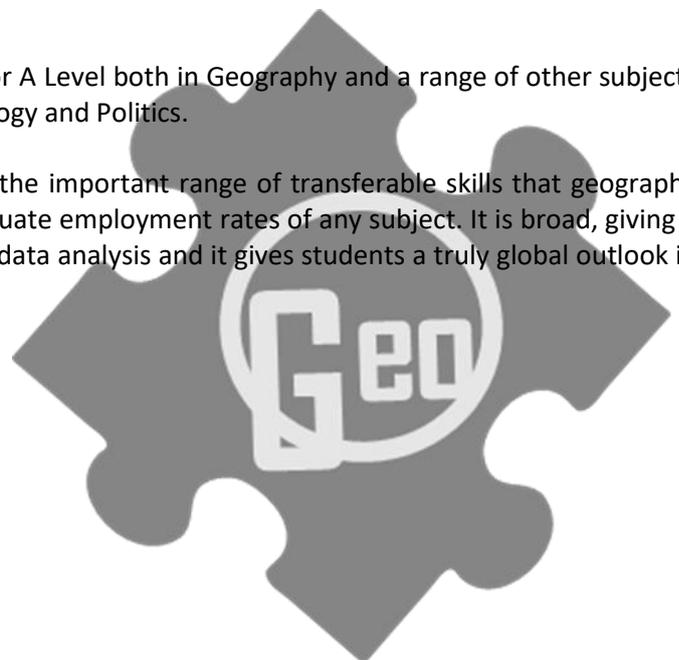
**PAPER 3:** Geographical Applications and Skills

Topics: *Issue Evaluation, Fieldwork and Geographical Skills. In order to complete this paper, there will be 2 days of fieldwork - one day in a physical environment and another in a human environment.*

### What does it lead to?

The new Geography GCSE provides an excellent basis for A Level both in Geography and a range of other subjects including Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Economics, Sociology and Politics.

Employers, Sixth Form Colleges and Universities value the important range of transferable skills that geography delivers. Indeed, geography has one of the highest graduate employment rates of any subject. It is broad, giving a breadth of study; it teaches fieldwork skills, teamwork, data analysis and it gives students a truly global outlook in an increasingly interdependent world.



## GRAPHIC DESIGN

Edexcel GCSE Design and Technology (Graphic Design) is engaging and inspiring, and reflects the demands of a truly modern and evolving society – this qualification enables students to apply themselves and develop the practical skills needed to succeed in their chosen pathway.

In contrast to KS3 Design and Technology, pupils have greater freedom to design products from their own specification. Typical outcomes could include; architectural models of shops, clubs and music venues; merchandise bags, business cards, promotional gifts, perfume/aftershave packages, music merchandise etc.

**Written examination (1 hour and 45 minutes): 50% of the qualification – 100 marks**

### Section A: Core

This section is 40 marks and contains a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions. There will be 10 marks of calculation questions in Section A.

### Section B: Material categories

This section is 60 marks and contains a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions. There will be 5 marks of calculation questions in Section B.

**Non-examined assessment: 50% of the qualification – 100 marks**

There are four parts to the assessment:

- 1 – Investigate: This includes investigation of needs and research, and a product specification
- 2 – Design: This includes producing different design ideas, review of initial ideas, and development of design ideas into a chosen design, communication of design ideas and review of the chosen design
- 3 – Make: This includes manufacture, and quality and accuracy
- 4 – Evaluate: This includes testing and evaluation

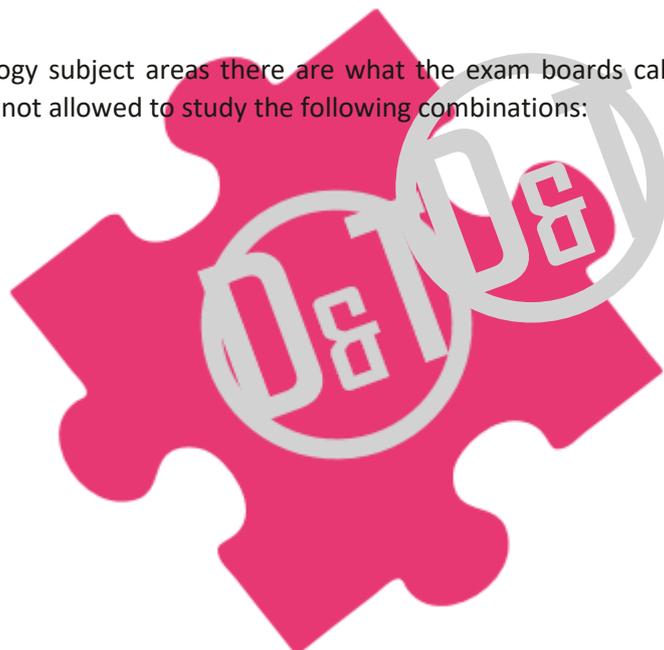
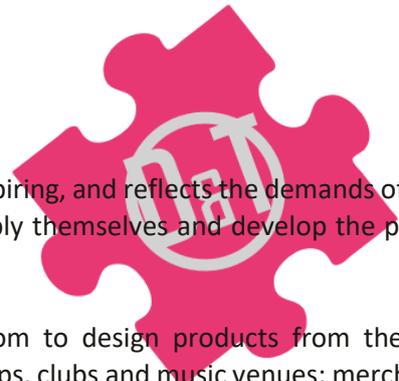
### What does it lead to?

This is a full course GCSE and therefore leads, on a point score basis, to all Further Education programmes.

Careers in graphic design include; graphic designer, digital and multimedia design, colour technologist and communication design.

Please note, within the Design and Technology subject areas there are what the exam boards call “forbidden combinations”. This means that students are not allowed to study the following combinations:

- *Product Design with Fashion & Textiles*
- *Graphics with Fashion & Textiles*
- *Product Design with Graphics*





## HISTORY

### What will I study?

- **Medicine in Britain c1250 - Today.**

Developments in the understanding of health and medicine from the Middle Ages through to modern times, including a study of medicine during WW1.

- **Early Elizabethan England 1558 - 1588.**

An investigation of the first 30 years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, one of England's most characterful and significant monarchs.

- **Germany 1918 - 1939.**

What problems did Germany face after the First World War and how did these problems contribute to the rise of the Nazi party?

- **Either:**

- **British America 1713-83.**

How Britain developed and then lost its colonies in America, leading to the establishment of the USA.

Or:

- **The American West c1835 -1895.**

The heroic and tragic tale of the creation of the modern USA, focussing on the struggle for control of 'the West', the land of cowboys, Indians, gold-miners and outlaws.

### How will I be taught?

History is taught in mixed ability groups. We aim to use a variety of resources such as film clips, photographs and documents. History is a literacy-based subject, and you will have to write coherent answers that range in length from a paragraph to short essays.

### How will I be examined?

At the end of Year 11 you will sit 4 GCSE exam papers that examine all the topics outlined above. There will be no coursework. There is no tiered entry, everyone sits the same papers.

### What's it all for?

Employers, VI Form colleges and universities value the skills students develop through studying History. Employers appreciate your ability to analyse information and draw conclusions, whether you're analysing the customer profile of a leading clothing chain or briefing a client on marketing strategy.

History supercharges such skills. It encourages you to think for yourself and support your ideas with carefully chosen evidence and it teaches you to research a subject and present your findings in a coherent way. Most important of all, History is intrinsically interesting, and an understanding of how this country and the wider world have developed will help you to become a thoughtful, well-informed member of today's global society.



## JAPANESE

From anime to noodle bars, karaoke to manga, bonsai to origami, Japanese culture has become part of international culture. A knowledge of the language will give you access to Japanese film, animations, and comic books; give you an insight into the special terminology used in your favourite martial art; help you understand the cultural basis for kamikaze training and the origin of the samurai warrior; and develop your ability to order sushi like a native at your favourite Japanese restaurant!

### How is it assessed?

The two-year GCSE course consists of four units based on speaking, listening, reading and writing. There will be exams in each of these units at the end of the course. You will develop your understanding of Japanese in a variety of contexts and develop a greater understanding of Japan and its unique culture.

### Why choose Japanese?

Choosing a less commonly learned language will pop out on your résumé and distinguish you from the crowd; and don't forget Japan has one of the largest economies in the world. Japanese companies are among the largest, most efficiently run, and most well-known firms in the world. Familiar names like Sony, Toshiba, Sanyo, Casio, Canon, Nintendo, Honda, Toyota, Mitsubishi, and many others have permeated the world market in a variety of sectors and have offices in major cities all around the world. Whether you're interested in business, engineering, design, research, economics, or politics, chances are you will be competing with, if not working for, a Japanese company at some point in the future.

Japanese has been taught at Notre Dame for the last nine years and during this time we have been developing links with Notre Dame High School in Kyoto. Last year we took a very successful trip to Kyoto and the current GCSE class are looking forward to going in February.

The course assumes no prior knowledge of Japanese so all students start together as absolute beginners. This is however a demanding two year course which many schools teach in more than two years. Students are expected to learn quickly, with over 300 Japanese characters needed to complete the course. As such there will be a number of lunchtime sessions in the second half of the summer term this year when students will be introduced to and expected to learn hiragana (46 characters) with homework being set over the summer holiday to help with this. Your application to study Japanese will be considered based on your achievement in French or Spanish by the end of Year 9 and your overall attitude to learning and progress in other subjects.

If you are confident with languages and have an interest in Japan, then take this unique opportunity to learn Japanese and within weeks of starting you will not only be speaking a new language but also reading and writing in a completely different pictorial alphabet. For more information, please contact Mr Pritchard.



## MATHEMATICS

Mathematics is taught in 10 ability sets with students able to move between the sets depending on progress.



### We aim to:

- provide learners with a rich experience of Mathematics
- provide learners with greater opportunities for using and interpreting Mathematics
- improve attitudes towards Mathematics
- inspire and prepare young people to continue Mathematics studies beyond GCSE

### How is it assessed?

Students follow either the linear Higher or linear Foundation AQA syllabuses. Students sit three exam papers, one non-calculator and two calculator papers, all of which are taken at the end of Year 11. Each paper is marked out of 80 and is worth 33% of the exam.

There is no coursework in Mathematics.

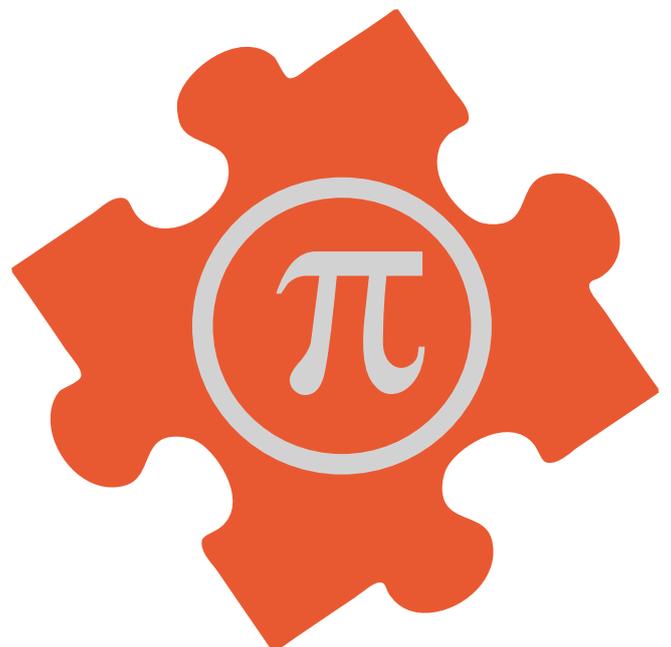
### What resources are available?

A variety of materials are available in lessons with each student assigned a copy of the higher or foundation text book. Each student is also given access to the 'Mymaths' web site which has a large database of lesson resources and worksheets.

### What can it lead to?

Many students go on to study Mathematics at A Level and beyond at university. Mathematics is a highly respected qualification that demonstrates the ability to think logically and solve problems.

Sixth Forms, colleges and employers require either a grade 4 or 5 or above in Mathematics. We guide pupils towards the route that is most likely to deliver this outcome.



## MUSIC

The Music Department at Notre Dame is at the heart of the school community. The department takes an active part in the very busy musical life of the school, performing in the many concerts, school musicals, Masses, competitions, festivals and tours.

GCSE Music students are eligible for a subsidised weekly instrumental lesson from a visiting specialist teacher. We have a large team of highly experienced visiting teachers and regularly enter pupils for Associated Board, Guildhall, Trinity and Rock School exams and diplomas.

### There are three main elements to the course:

- 1. Performing coursework 30%.** Prepare and record 2 performances (1 solo and 1 ensemble). Minimum duration of combined performances is 4 minutes. Students will continually work on their performance during the course in practical lessons, and the recordings will take place in Year 11. Performances at Grade 4 or higher will be awarded additional marks.
- 2. Composing coursework 30%.** Compose two pieces (1 from a selection of composition briefs and 1 free composition). These could be in any style. Students compose pieces throughout the course during practical lessons and select the best two for submission. Minimum duration of combined compositions is 4 minutes.
- 3. Appraising exam 40%.** 1hr 45min exam at the end of Year 11. Based on four areas of study spanning many different styles of music from classical to rock, stage and screen and world music. Students will study selected works and additional pieces from the four topic areas.

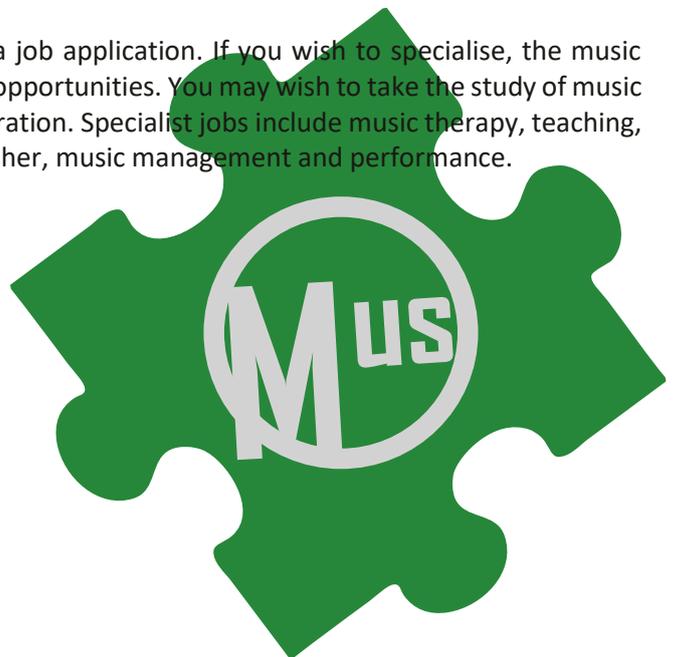
### How is it assessed?

Performing and composing are coursework. As each piece of work is produced it is marked internally by music department staff, and moderated externally by the exam board. It is returned to the student for review and development. Students will submit their best examples of work to the exam board at the end of the course. The listening exam in the summer term in Year 11 is based on the set works and topic areas studied throughout the course. This is marked externally.

### What does it lead to?

Music is seen by employers generally as a subject that fosters a number of valuable skills: teamwork and communication, self-motivation, discipline and creative thinking to name but a few.

Music GCSE is considered an interesting subject to see on a job application. If you wish to specialise, the music business is one of the biggest in the UK, with a wide range of opportunities. You may wish to take the study of music further to A Level or beyond and music GCSE is a good preparation. Specialist jobs include music therapy, teaching, production promotion, recording engineer, composer, publisher, music management and performance.



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

## Why Study PE?

GCSE PE is an opportunity for those that are sport minded, and are playing regular sport, to extend their knowledge in the world of Sport Science! The beauty of studying it is that you are assessed in activities you would be taking part in anyway. There are also a number of elements in the GCSE PE course that are also covered in Biology, so you will find you get taught some similar content in both subjects – excellent reinforcement! You will have 5 hours a fortnight with which to cover theory and practical elements.

## The GCSE PE course will appeal to you if you:

- have a keen interest in sport and always look forward to your PE lessons
- want to follow a course that develops knowledge and understanding through practical involvement
- are interested in knowing more about the benefits of sport and exercise
- feel you want to improve your own performance in a range of sports roles
- would like to study a course that is active and one that you will enjoy
- are considering a sports related career
- are already demonstrating a commitment to a regular sporting activity outside of school
- are regularly playing sport in your own time – either inside or outside school

## You will learn about

- Movement Analysis
- Sports Psychology
- Anatomy and Physiology and the use of data
- Physical Training
- Socio Cultural Influences
- Health, Fitness and Well-being

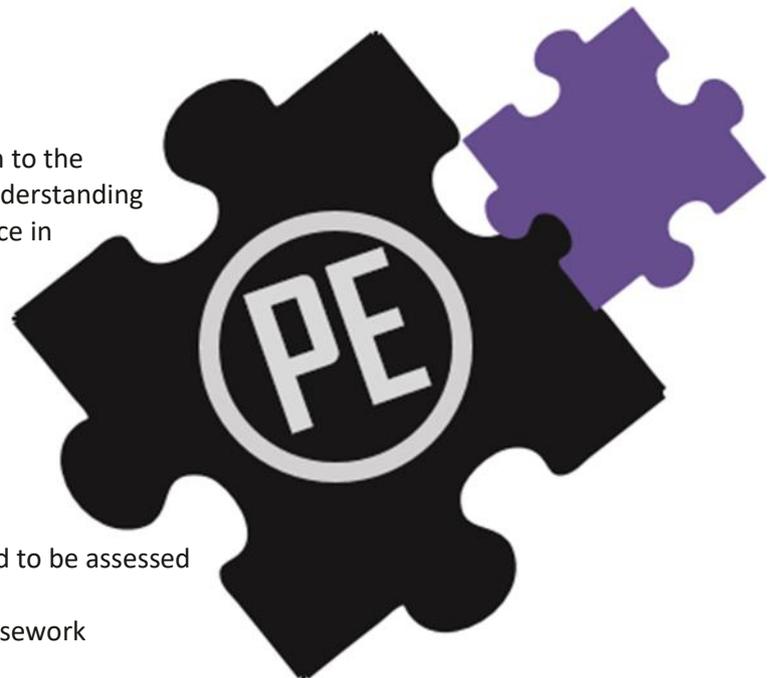
Students will receive a well-rounded and full introduction to the world of PE, Sport and Sport Science by developing an understanding of how the mind and body work in relation to performance in physical activity.

## There are four components in the course:

- 1) Fitness and Body systems -  
(written examination – 1 hour, 45 mins)  
Health and Performance  
(written examination – 1 hour, 15 mins)  
Practical Performance (assessment) – you will need to be assessed in 3 different activity areas.
- 2) Personal Exercise Programme (assessment) – Coursework

## What does it lead to?

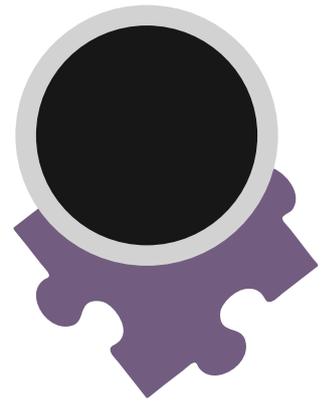
Physical education teaches life skills such as communication, teamwork and problem solving – all skills that employers are looking for. It can lead to careers in Physiotherapy, Coaching, Sport Science, Performance Analysis (every professional sports team has one!) and many more.



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION – CORE PE

All students will take part in core PE as you have done for the last three years. This is a non-examined subject where you get two hours a week of healthy physical activity, and no revision/homework/stress!

Students will study a range of activities across the two years as we look at maintaining a healthy, active lifestyle. We will also focus on teaching lifelong enjoyment of physical activity!



To maintain an active, healthy lifestyle, young people (aged 5-18) need to do 2 types of physical activity each week:

- aerobic exercise
- exercises to strengthen their muscles and bones

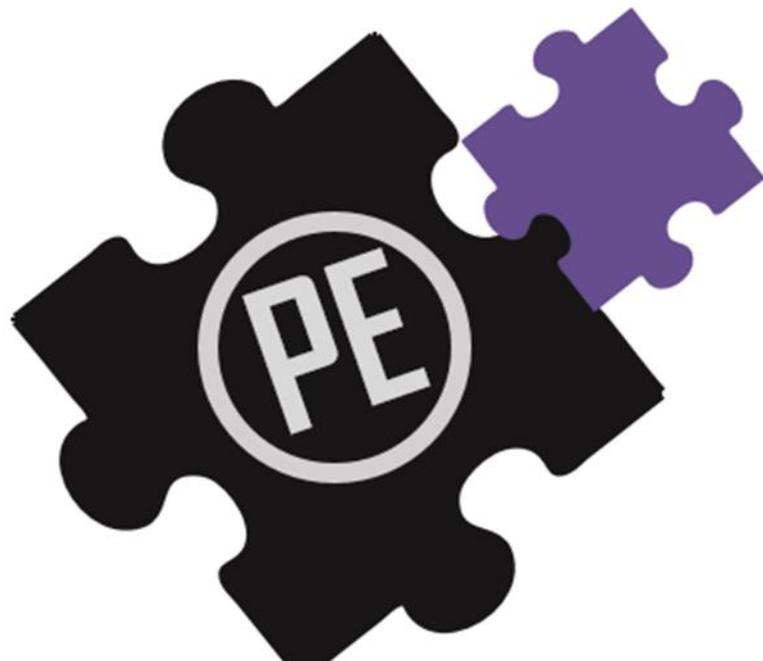
Young people should:

- aim for an average of at least 60 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity a day across the week
- take part in a variety of types and intensities of physical activity across the week to develop movement skills, muscles and bones
- reduce the time spent sitting or lying down and break up long periods of not moving with some activity. Aim to spread activity throughout the day. All activities should make you breathe faster and feel warmer.

We will aim to study a wide breadth of activities, with the opportunity to study some new activities throughout the two years. Activities could include:-

- football
- basketball
- tennis
- aerobics
- netball
- hockey
- badminton
- Alternative Sports E.G Roundnet

Edited from - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-children-and-young-people/>



## PRODUCT DESIGN

Edexcel GCSE Design and Technology (Resistant Materials) is engaging and inspiring, and reflects the demands of a truly modern and evolving society – this qualification enables students to apply themselves and develop the practical skills needed to succeed in their chosen pathway.

In contrast to lower school Design and Technology, pupils have greater freedom to design products from their own specification. Typical outcomes could include; lamps, radios, MP3 players or exciting combinations. The materials used can include a range of polymers, wood, metal and glass.

Students will have the opportunity to take part in external competitions such as; the Faraday Challenge, the Design and Technology Tournament and F1 in Schools. In Year 11 students also have the opportunity to apply for the Arkwright Scholarship which supports students in fulfilling careers and further education in engineering.

### **Written examination (1 hour and 45 minutes): 50% of the qualification – 100 marks**

#### Section A: Core

This section is 40 marks and contains a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions. There will be 10 marks of calculation questions in Section A.

#### Section B: Material categories

This section is 60 marks and contains a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions. There will be 5 marks of calculation questions in Section B.

### **Non-examined assessment: 50% of the qualification – 100 marks**

There are four parts to the assessment:

- 1 – Investigate: This includes investigation of needs and research, and a product specification
- 2 – Design: This includes producing different design ideas, review of initial ideas, development of design ideas into a chosen design, communication of design ideas and review of the chosen design
- 3 – Make: This includes manufacture, and quality and accuracy
- 4 – Evaluate: This includes testing and evaluation

### **What does it lead to?**

This is a full course GCSE and therefore leads, on a point score basis, to all Further Education programmes.

Careers in Product Design include; product designer, industrial designer, materials engineer, automotive engineer, 3D design and aviation engineer.

Please note, within the Design and Technology subject areas there are what the exam boards call “forbidden combinations”. This means that students are not allowed to study the following combinations:

- *Product Design with Fashion & Textiles*
- *Graphics with Fashion & Textiles*
- *Product Design with Graphics*

### **Personal Social Health Economic Education (PSHEE) non examined**

***'PSHEE is one of the most important subjects as it teaches you how to be happy and lead a good life' Y10 Notre Dame Student***

You are growing up in a rapidly changing world, full of opportunities.

PSHEE is a compulsory, non-examined subject which prepares you for life, relationships, work and society.

PSHEE equips you with trustworthy and reliable values, knowledge and skills to give you a balanced life from:

- positive mental and physical health
- self-confidence, self-esteem and resilience
- the ability to identify and protect yourself from risks and keep yourself safe, both online and offline
- an understanding of your unique personality and skills
- economic wellbeing and potential career pathways
- ways to access specialist advice, support and guidance within school and appropriate external agencies
- effective strategies to prepare for exams and revision



PSHEE goes alongside RE to give you the attributes you need to thrive as an individual, family member and member of society including:

- opportunities to reflect and deepen your beliefs, values and opinions
- an understanding of your emotions and how to manage them
- an understanding of British Values, democracy and relevant laws
- an understanding of life from other people's perspective and how this can inform our own opinions
- developing a respect for equality and diversity in society
- preparing for intimate, long term relationships

PSHEE is taught by specially trained teachers, 1 period per fortnight. Our course uses carefully chosen, age appropriate resources in keeping with our school's Catholic ethos. We solely use reliable and trustworthy sources accredited by the Catholic Education Service, the national PSHE Association and Norfolk Local Authority.

PSHEE is a vital opportunity to explore often sensitive issues in a safe and respectful way. Students are given reliable information and are invited to discuss their meaning and importance by discussing them together. Students are then given opportunities to develop their personal beliefs, values and opinions through individual written work.

PSHEE is taught in line with the following school policies which can be accessed on the Policies page of our website:

- Acceptable Use and E-Safety Policy
- Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance
- Drugs Education
- Equality and Diversity
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Safeguarding
- Special Needs

If at any time you and/or your parent(s)/carer(s) wish to discuss the contents of the PSHEE curriculum, or any issues raised in the lessons, please contact Mr Savage our Head of PSHEE.

## RELIGIOUS STUDIES

### What is Religious Studies?

A GCSE in Religious Studies gives candidates the opportunity to explore the moral, social and religious dimensions of their own lives and the lives of others. The course, whilst respectful of all points of view, offers a clear study of Catholic Christianity and Judaism.

The course studies Christian and Jewish beliefs and teachings and how these are expressed in worship and lifestyle. We also study a variety of moral issues and religious and nonreligious responses to them, opening opportunity for students to engage in philosophical and ethical thinking and to formulate and share their own opinions.

### How is the subject taught?

Religious Studies is taught in mixed ability groups. Pupils are expected to be active and engaged in their learning and are encouraged to participate in discussion and debate. As a literacy-based subject, focus is placed on developing coherent written work, with the inclusion of rich vocabulary and personal appraisal.

### How is the subject assessed?

Religious Studies is assessed by three papers which are taken at the end of Year 11

Paper 1 (50% of GCSE): Study of Catholic Christianity (1 hour 45minutes).

Paper 2 (25% of GCSE): Study of Judaism (50 minutes).

Paper 3 (25% of GCSE): Philosophy & Ethics based on Catholic Christianity (50 minutes).

### The course is designed to help all students to:

- Develop a wider awareness of religious and moral beliefs and practices
- Explore faith and its impact on life
- Understand the importance of being a responsible citizen in a multi-ethnic and multi-faith society
- Develop confidence and be self-regulated in their studies
- Gain a GCSE in Religious Studies

The A Level course in Religious Studies: Philosophy, Ethics and Developments in Christian Thought is offered to students with sufficiently high GCSE grades. It provides an excellent preparation for careers in law, medicine, teaching, social work, politics, management, personnel work, journalism and various ministries within the Church.



## SCIENCE

In upper school, Science is a core subject where each student is assigned to a 'pathway' of qualification(s). The following information is therefore provided to inform students and parents, as opposed to being a part of the Preferences process.

We provide two different Science pathways: students are assigned to one of these on the basis of their academic attainment; ability in practical work; attitude to learning; attendance and ability to cope with formal examinations.

### GCSE Combined Science pathway

This pathway will be followed by the majority of our students, and will result in students earning two GCSE certificates, the grades of which are linked. This qualification is linear: students will sit all their exams at the end of the course. Students will be examined at the end of Year 11 with six 1 hour 15 minute exam papers: two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas. Questions in the written exams will partly draw on the knowledge and understanding students have gained, including specific practical activities undertaken during the course.

### GCSE Triple Science pathway

This pathway will be followed by a minority of our students, and will result in students earning three GCSE certificates: **AQA GCSE Biology, AQA GCSE Chemistry** and **AQA GCSE Physics**. All three GCSEs are taught throughout Years 10 and 11. This pathway is referred to as an 'accelerated route', as content for three GCSEs is compressed in the same amount of classroom time that Combined Science Pathway students receive in order to study two GCSEs.

The top 64 Science students based on Year 7 to 9 results are, by default, selected for this pathway. Students are able to 'opt out' if they feel they will not be able to commit the extra time and effort required for the Triple Pathway: in such a scenario those students in positions 65 and below are approached.

The three separate Science GCSEs (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) will be examined through two 1 hour 45 minute exam papers per subject at the end of Year 11. For each GCSE, questions in the written exams will partly draw on the knowledge and understanding students have gained, including specific practical activities undertaken during the course.

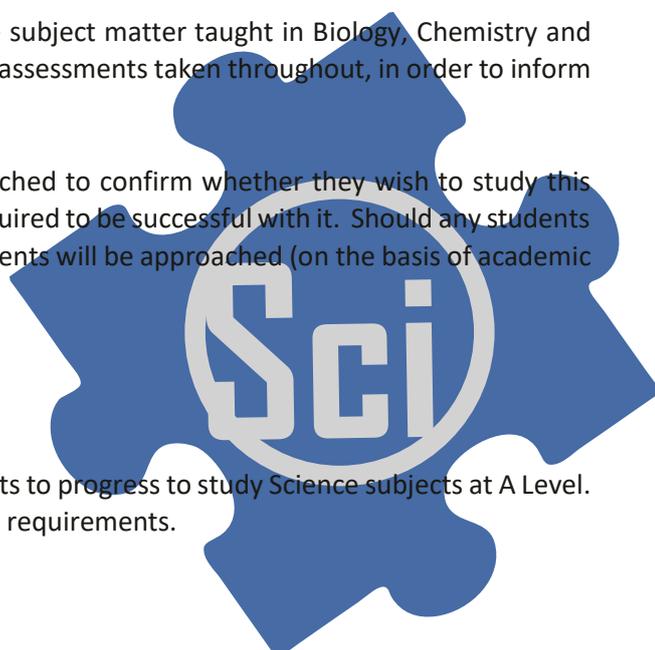
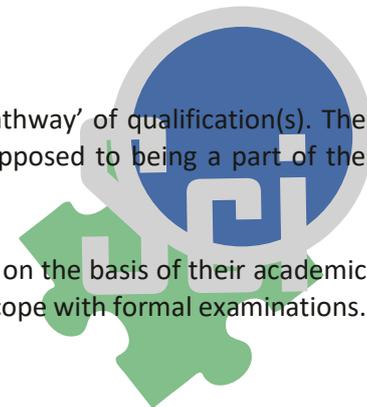
### How will I find out which pathway I have been entered for?

During years 7 to 9 students sit a number of tests which include subject matter taught in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The results of these tests will be combined with teacher assessments taken throughout, in order to inform the Year 10 and 11 pathway and setting decisions.

Students initially selected for the Triple Pathway will be approached to confirm whether they wish to study this route, and whether they can commit the extra effort and time required to be successful with it. Should any students express a preference not to follow the Triple Pathway, other students will be approached (on the basis of academic results).

### How will the pathway I follow affect my future choices?

Both the Science pathways on offer at Notre Dame enable students to progress to study Science subjects at A Level. Please refer to the Sixth Form prospectus for current grade entry requirements.



# SPANISH

## Why learn Spanish for GCSE?

In today's world, speaking a foreign language is becoming increasingly important. It is widely recognised that Spanish in particular, is one of the most valuable and useful second languages to learn.

Spanish is spoken as a mother tongue by over 480 million people, and is the second most spoken language in the world after Chinese. It is also the second most widely spoken language in the various countries of the world after English. Twenty-one countries, including Spain, Mexico, Argentina and Peru, have Spanish as their official language, and it is becoming ever more important in the United States.

Spain is Britain's third most important trading partner, and South America is becoming ever more important. This means that companies are looking for people who are able to communicate in Spanish, so even if you want to become an engineer or lawyer, Spanish will make you more employable and lead to better pay.

Research has shown that Spanish is one of the easiest foreign languages to learn for speakers of English. Its pronunciation system is simple and regular, and many words are similar to English.

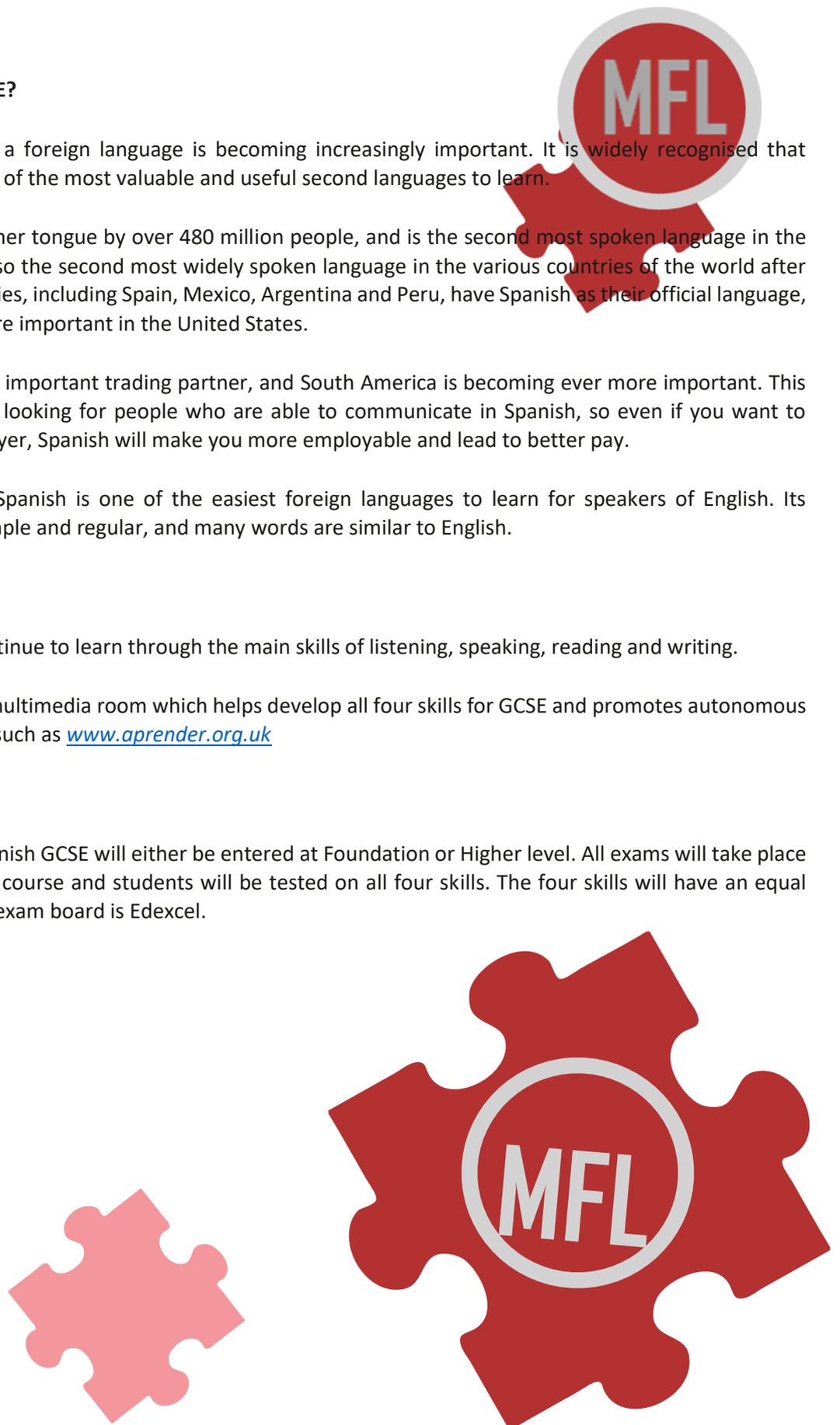
## How is the subject taught?

At GCSE level, students continue to learn through the main skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Students have access to a multimedia room which helps develop all four skills for GCSE and promotes autonomous learning by using websites such as [www.aprender.org.uk](http://www.aprender.org.uk)

## How is it assessed?

Candidates for the new Spanish GCSE will either be entered at Foundation or Higher level. All exams will take place at the end of the two year course and students will be tested on all four skills. The four skills will have an equal weighting (25% each). Our exam board is Edexcel.



# When . . . .

- you have attended Parents' evenings and viewed the subject video's on the NDHS website
- you and your parents/carers have studied this booklet carefully
- you have discussed your preferences with subject staff and your form tutor
- you have made a decision based on sound reasons

. . . . **then** you can complete the *online GCSE Preferences* form with your final subjects.

Do this via the school website – [www.ndhs.org.uk](http://www.ndhs.org.uk) – select Curriculum>Key Stage 4. The form will be live **on 4<sup>th</sup> February** at the end of the school day.

# Where to start...

**Select your Language,**

**Then select a 1<sup>st</sup> Preference and a Reserve subject in both Preference blocks.**

**Read this carefully:-**

- Select the language you have been studying in Y7-Y9 – you will continue to study this at GCSE
- Your **1<sup>st</sup> Preference subject, in each block**, is the subject you most wish to study alongside the compulsory subjects.
- It is important you understand that your **Reserve subject in each block**, is the subject that you would wish to study should your 1st Preference be unavailable
- Sometimes subjects are **oversubscribed**, in which case a limit on the numbers may be imposed and you will be allocated to your Reserve subject.
- Sometimes subjects are **undersubscribed**, in which case the subject may not run at all and you will be allocated to your Reserve subject.
- In addition, you may have selected a subject for which historical performance in Yr 7-9, demonstrate a limited progress. In this instance we may make the decision to allocate you to your Reserve subject or an alternative, more suitable subject; ultimately we want you to be successful in your GCSE course.
- So **THINK CAREFULLY** about your 1st subject preference and Reserve subject preferences in each block.

## Year 9 Preferences 2022 - guidance to help you complete the online form

Access the form via the school website [www.ndhs.org.uk](http://www.ndhs.org.uk) –Curriculum >Key Stage 4

The form will ask for:-

- **your PARENT's / CARER's email address.** This so the system can automatically return a copy of the selections you have made to this address. If you cannot immediately locate your copy – check your Junk and Spam mailboxes in the first instance. Keep this copy somewhere safe.
- **your SCHOOL email address ending in . . @ndhs.org.uk** – so we can contact you in school.
- **your LEGAL last name.** This is good practice and helps to avoid confusion. Your GCSE exam certificates will be issued using your LEGAL names.
- **your LEGAL first name.** Again, this is good practice.
- **your Year 9 Form** – this helps us to get messages to your Form Tutor.

The following subjects are compulsory at GCSE:

- English Language;
- English Literature;
- Mathematics;
- Religious Studies;
- Science (Combined or Triple pathways).
- In addition, all students have timetabled Core PE and PSHEE (which is non examined)

This is what the online form looks like:-

## Year 9 Preferences 2022

Complete the form WITH YOUR PARENTS/CARERS and submit by Friday 25th February 2022.

This form is automatically collecting email addresses and will return a copy of the form to the address used (check your 'junk' and 'spam' areas) - keep your copy somewhere safe!

Email \*

Your email address

Student's School email address ending in [@ndhs.org.uk](mailto:ndhs.org.uk) \*

Your answer

Student's LEGAL LAST Name \*

Your answer

Student's LEGAL FIRST Name \*

Your answer

Year 9 Form \*

- 9ABO
- 9BGA
- 9CMI
- 9CMO
- 9DMC
- 9JBE
- 9PJO
- 9SDY

The following subjects are compulsory at GCSE:-

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- MFL – a Modern Foreign Language
- Religious Studies
- Science (Combined or Triple pathways) the Head of Science will determine which course is appropriate for you.

In addition all students have timetabled lessons of:-

- Core Physical Education
- PSHEE which is non-examined.

MFL - Modern Foreign Language - Select the language you have been studying in Y7-Y9. You will continue to study this at GCSE

French

Spanish

Select the language you have been studying in Y7-Y9

Japanese at GCSE

Japanese

This is only for students who wish to be considered eligible to study Japanese at GCSE level. Your application will be based on your achievement in French or Spanish by the end of Year 9, and your overall attitude to learning and progress in other subjects.



Parent / Carer name \*

Your answer

We aspire to meet your first preference but we cannot guarantee that all subjects will run or that a space will be available. Please select "I agree - form complete" and then press "Submit". Many thanks for your responses. \*

I agree - form complete

**Submit your form by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

**The online system will send a copy to your PARENT'S/CARER'S email address  
– keep this copy somewhere safe!**

**Check your Junk and Spam mailboxes if you cannot immediately locate it.**

**Contact Mrs C Redfern – Senior Data & Curriculum Coordinator**

**Via [credfern@ndhs.org.uk](mailto:credfern@ndhs.org.uk) if you have any questions**

#### **A reminder:-**

We aspire to meet your first preferences but we cannot guarantee that all subjects will run or that a space will be available.

If a subject is oversubscribed, we will assign you to your reserve subject. Likewise, if a subject is undersubscribed, it may not run and we will assign you to your reserve subject.

**If we consider a student to have selected a subject for which they are considered unsuitable, we will allocate the student to a subject where they have the best chance of enjoyment and success.**

We will balance students' preferences against the overall constraints that these choices give rise to in creating our Year 10 timetable.

EXTRA BOOKLETS ARE AVAILABLE FROM STUDENT RECEPTION  
or online at [www.ndhs.org.uk](http://www.ndhs.org.uk) - select Curriculum >Key Stage 4

