St Dominic's Priory School

GCSE OPTIONS BOOKLET

2026-2028

"THE PEOPLE WHO ARE CRAZY ENOUGH TO BELIEVE THEY CAN CHANGE THE WORLD ARE THE ONES WHO DO"

Steve Jobs

WHERE DO I START?

It is important to have a selection of subjects, which will keep all career paths open and will also provide variety within your school day. Universities and employers are looking to recruit people with a broad and balanced education.

The St Dominic's Priory aim is to ensure that you engage in subjects in which you can achieve; this is why you should seek advice from your parents/carers, subject teachers and your tutor. Your options and future careers area are also covered during PHSE lessons, where you are able to discuss your career aspirations and seek guidance on different pathways. They can help you by giving impartial and specific careers advice.

Making good choices

1) Spend time researching the options available to avoid making a decision that you may later regret! Read through your school options booklet, speak with your subject teachers and think about what future career you may want.

2) Think about your own abilities and interests. What is going to be right for you? Ask yourself, whether the subjects you are choosing will inspire and motivate you for the next two years.

3) Which subjects do you enjoy?

4) Your final choice should reflect your strengths - what you are good at and think you can achieve good grades in.

5) Do not choose a subject because you like the teacher – they may not be teaching your class next year.

6) Do not choose a subject because your friend is choosing it or wants you to choose it – that subject might be right for them but might not be right for you

REMEMBER The final choice must be your OWN

HOW MY SKILLS AND INTERESTS MAY RELATE TO SUBJECTS

PROBLEM SOLVING

Art and Design, Business, Computer Science, Design and Technology, Geography, History, Maths, Science

BEING CREATIVE

Art and Design, Design and Technology, Dance, English, Geography, History, Languages, Music, Performing Arts, PE

COMMUNICATING

Art and Design, Business, Dance, Design and Technology, English, Geography, History, Languages, Music, Performing Arts, RE

GOOD WITH NUMBERS

Computer Science, Design and Technology, Geography, Maths, Science,

ANALYTICAL

Art and Design, Business, Computer Science, Design and Technology, English, Geography, History, Maths, RE

HANDS ON

Art and Design, Dance, Design and Technology, Music, PE, Performing Arts

WORKING INDEPENDENTLY

Art and Design, Dance, Design and Technology, English, Geography, History, Languages, Music, PE, Performing Arts, RE

OBSERVING

Art and Design, English, Geography, History, Languages, Music, PE, Performing Arts, RE, Science

EXAM BOARD INFORMATION

Below is a list of the exam boards each subject works with.

AQA	OCR	Edexcel	Eduqas
English Maths Science double award Science triple award History Design and Technology Business Studies French Spanish	Computer Science Art and Design Music	Geography Sport (Pearson)	Religious Studies Performing Arts
		Cambridge International	
		Science single award	

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?

⇒ **Partner with school**—attend parents evening and engage with reports to find out how you can support your child at home

⇒ **Workload manager**—Help your child manage their workload at home, homework will increase in Year 10 and throughout to Year 11. Help support your child in ensuring all homework is completed on time. Put key dates and deadlines in your own diary to help manage their workload.

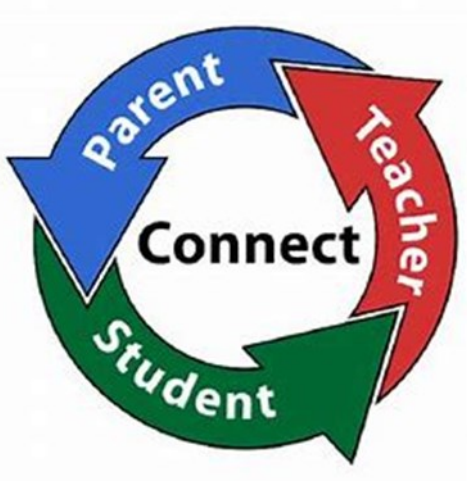
⇒ Work with your child to create a homework timetable, allowing them to organise their time ahead of exams

⇒ **Be their study buddy**—show an interest in their subjects and what they are learning. Are there places you can go at weekend to support their studies in school.

⇒ **Provide the tools for homework**—allow quite space for homework to be completed

⇒ **Emotional support**—listen to their worries and anxieties and help them to manage their feelings and solve any problems

⇒ **Coursework Editor**—take an interest in your child's coursework and read their work to help spot spelling errors and grammatical errors.



YEAR 10 AND 11 INFORMATION

YEAR 10

Parents Evening: Autumn term 1

Mock Exams: First half of the year

Reports: February and May

YEAR 11

Parents Evening: Autumn term 1

Mock Exams: First half of the year

Reports: February

HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR MY GCSES?

⇒ Learn the information first time, this will make revision a lot easier and mean you are not trying to learn something new at a later date or on your own

⇒ Liaise with my class teacher if you have any questions

⇒ Ensure I have the appropriate revision materials e.g. revision guides, access to GCSE Pod etc.

⇒ Attend the subject revision clubs

⇒ Sit down and plan a revision timetable

⇒ Take a break—do not sit all evening and weekends revising. You need to give your brain time to decompress and digest what you have revised. Take the time to watch your favourite TV program, listen to some music or play a game of football with friends.

SUBJECT LEADERSHIP

During the autumn term of Year 10, each student will be presented with the opportunity to participate in the St Dominic's Subject Leadership Programme. This encourages students to develop their leadership skills across a range of themes which include; wider learning, wider exploring, wider reading and wider technology. When students become an ambassador for their chosen subject they demonstrate their initiative and commitment. Furthermore, they build in perseverance to complete the bronze, silver and gold levels of certification. This is an exciting and rewarding opportunity and supports the personal development of each individual and helps to prepare them for the possibility of undertaking a Prefect role in Year 11.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Work experience is an opportunity for young people to gain an insight into the 'World of Work' and to help prepare them for the responsibilities and opportunities of adult life. All students are required to undertake a work experience placement during the summer term of Year 10.

Placements are defined as experience in which students carry out a range of tasks and duties more or less as would regular employees but with emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience.

Information on work experience is shared with parents and students during the autumn term and placements are usually finalised early in the spring term. Work Experience and Careers Education is delivered through the PSHE curriculum.

REVISION GUIDES

To aid your revision at home, we have compiled this list of revision guides which will support you in each subject. The revision guides should be used to enrich your notes from lessons and will help guide you through exam questions in that specific subject.

English

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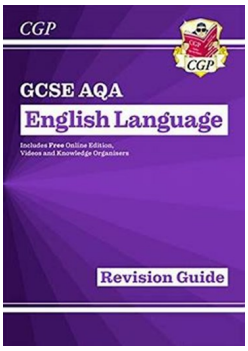

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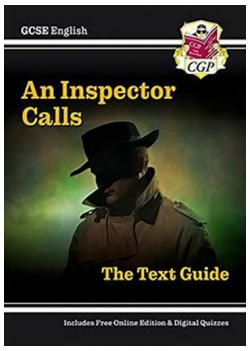

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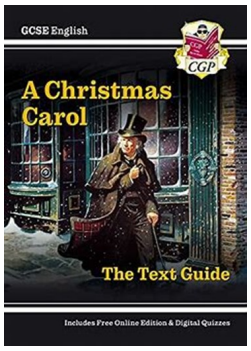

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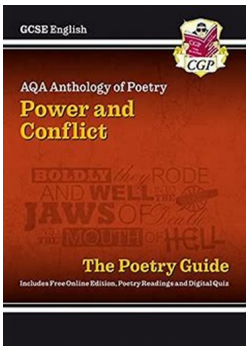

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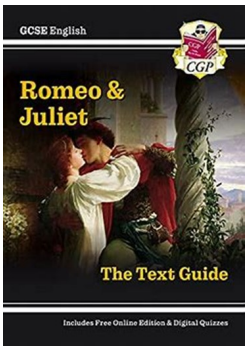
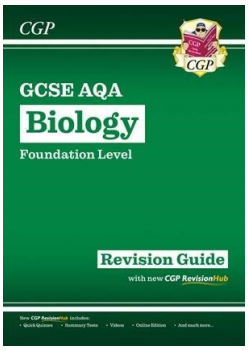


Science—Triple Award

ISBN: 9781789083248



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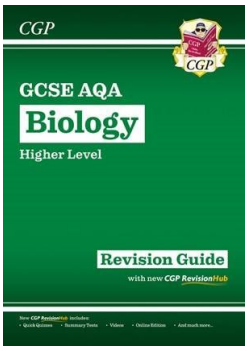

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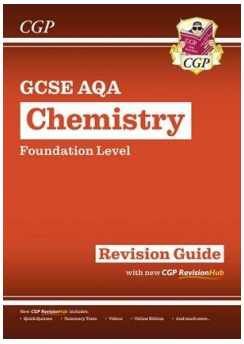

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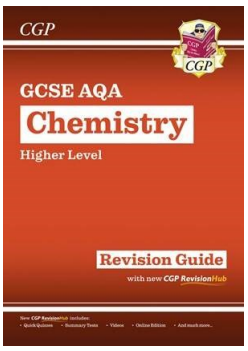

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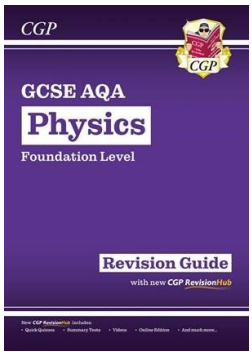

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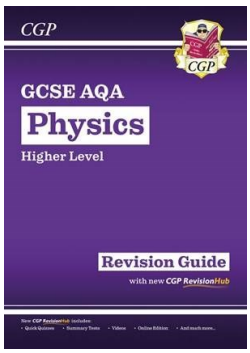

Science—Combined Science Trilogy

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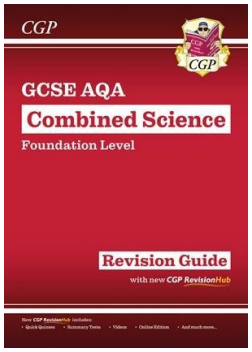
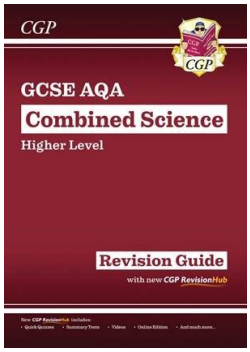


ISBN: 9781782945598



Maths

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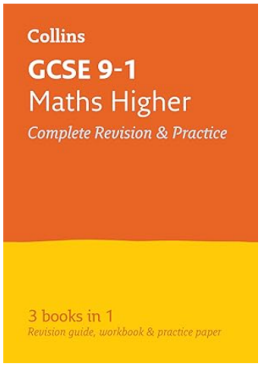

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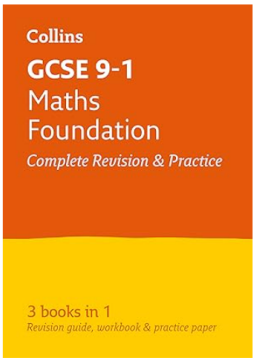

Geography

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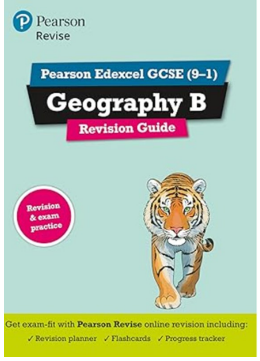
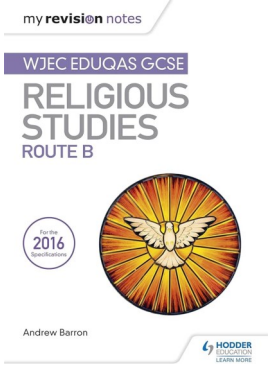


Religious Studies

ISBN: 9781510418356



History

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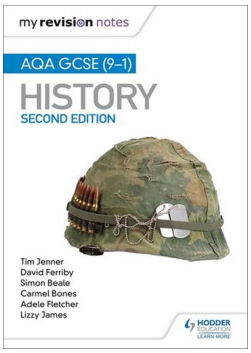

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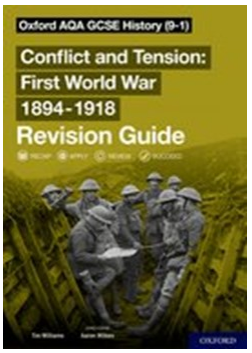

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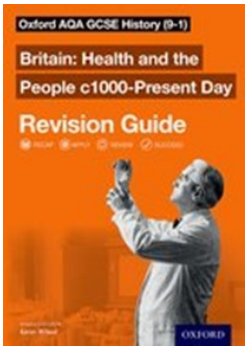

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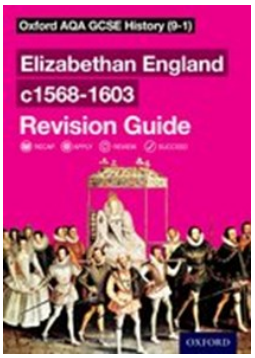

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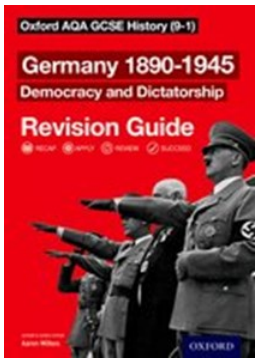
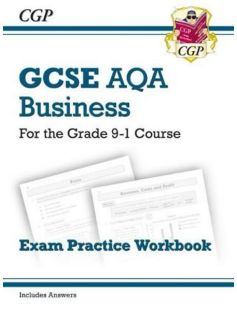


Business

ISBN 978-1782946922



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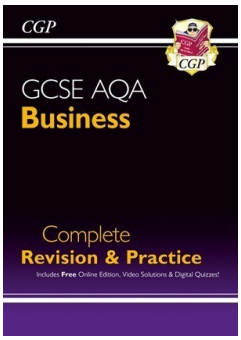


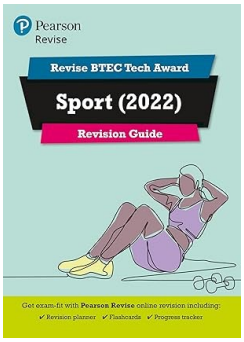
D&T

ISBN: 9781910523247

BTEC Sport

ISBN : 9781837740611

ISBN: 978-1292436142



Computer Science

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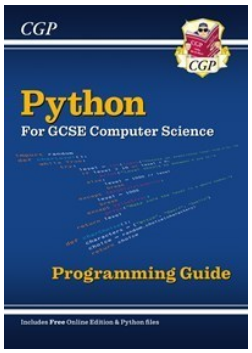

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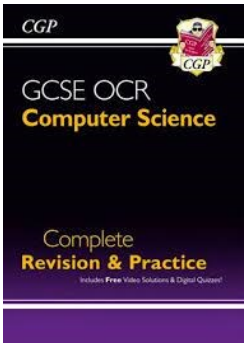

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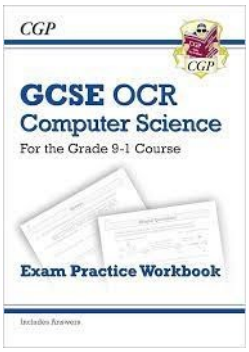

Music

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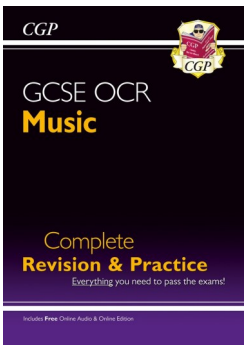


GCSE POD

GCSEPod is the ultimate digital learning platform for St Dominic's students and what's more, access is FREE.

It gives students everything they need on their journey to GCSE success.

GCSEPod brings together the key elements of all our subjects content, assessment, and data.

An all on one platform, offering our students award-winning, expert-led learning resources.

The platform is proven to help students achieve at least one grade higher on average than non-users.

<u>Other benefits of GCSEPod</u>

Builds confidence

Reduces stress

Promotes independent learning

All resources in one place

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Course Description:

Students study for two separate qualifications: GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature. Both GCSE courses culminate in two examination papers each, with the addition of a non-examination assessment in the form of a spoken language task response as part of the English Language GCSE only.

Each of the two examination papers for the GCSE English Language qualification are equally weighted, representing 50% each of the overall GCSE grade. Whilst the GCSE English Literature papers are weighted at 40% for Paper 1 and 60% for Paper 2.

Both courses challenge, encourage and enable learners to develop their skills, abilities and enthusiasm for the subject through a range of activities and tasks in order to cover the three main strands of the English curriculum: reading, writing and spoken language.

As part of the English Language GCSE, students study and will respond to a range of fiction and non-fiction texts covering 19th, 20th and 21st century time periods in order to develop their skills of reading, understanding and analysing. They will also undertake a variety of written tasks and activities to produce a range of creative, imaginative descriptions and narrative pieces, along with persuasive and argumentative responses in preparation for terminal exams.

GCSE Breakdown:

AQA Exam board

100% exam

Spoken Language component (Awards: Pass, Merit, Distinction)

Key Dates

Speaking and Listening: December—January

Hand in: May

"The majesty and grandeur of the English language; it's the greatest possession we have."

George Bernard Shaw

For the English Literature GCSE, students will have the opportunity to explore and examine a range of texts and genres along with their varied historical, political, social and economic contexts. These will include: study of a Shakespeare play, a 19th-century novel, modern prose and drama texts, plus a varied collection of poetry from different eras encompassing different themes; again in preparation for terminal examinations.

Assessment Methods:

Students will sit two examination papers for English Language and two examination papers for English Literature at the end of Year 11.

Students must also complete a non-examination assessment in the form of a spoken language task response as part of the English Language GCSE.

Places of interest:

Your local library, The British Library

Stratford-upon-Avon and The RSC, The Globe Theatre

The Charles Dickens Museum, Sherlock Holmes Museum—London

Jane Austen Centre and Bath, Howarth—Brontë sisters, Whitby—Bram Stoker

Grasmere—William Wordsworth, Poets' Corner—London

Career opportunities:

A-Levels/ Degree

Journalism

Law

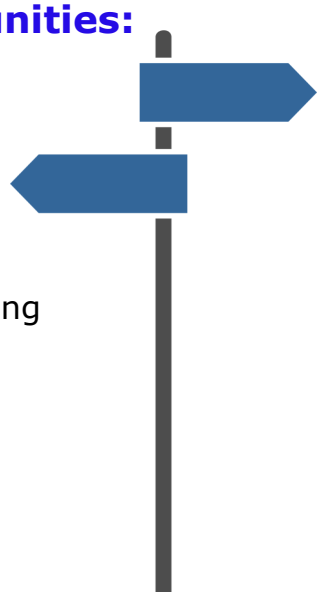
Teaching

Advertising/Marketing

Researcher

Publishing/ Author

Curator



Useful websites:

BBC Bitesize English/ English Literature

www.senecalearning.com

www.shmoop.com

For more information, please contact Miss S Lambe and Mr Cummings on Sharon.Lambe@stdominicspriory.co.uk and Daniel.Cummings@stdominicspriory.co.uk

Course Description:

Students will develop confidence and a positive attitude towards mathematics. They will recognise the importance of mathematics in their own lives and to society.

GCSE Mathematics is used by employers as a measure of a person's level of numeracy. Competency in numeracy is so crucial to adult life that the study of mathematics is an essential part of any student's education.

The GCSE course will cover all the elements of mathematics including number, geometry, algebra, probability, statistics, data handling, application to real life situations and other subjects.

GCSE Mathematics is a good foundation for the study of many subjects at Advanced Level, in particular Business Studies, Economics, Computer Science, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, Psychology and Sociology.

The higher tier GCSE syllabus gives students the opportunity to study A' Level Mathematics at the next stage of their education. A' level courses cover pure mathematics, mechanics, statistics and decision mathematics. Mechanics is strongly linked to physics and builds on ideas of forces and motion to work out how and why objects move. Statistics allows us to make sense of the complex and variable world around by using analytical methods to draw conclusions from sets of data. Decision is a branch of mathematics which uses algorithms to make optimal decisions.

GCSE Breakdown:

100% exam

Paper 1 Non-calculator

Paper 2 Calculator

Paper 3 Calculator

AQA Exam board

Key Dates

GCSE maths is normally one exam before the May half term and two exams in June.

"Mathematics is the alphabet with which God has written the universe"

Galileo

Assessment Methods:

GCSE is assessed by 3 x 1.5 hour papers either at higher tier (grades 3-9) or foundation tier (grades 1-5).

- Paper 1 Non-calculator
- Paper 2 Calculator
- Paper 3 Calculator

Key Stage 3 students are assessed using half-termly tests to monitor the topics taught during each half-term.

Key Stage 4 students are assessed with topic tests at different intervals. In addition students will also be assessed using past papers (one non-calculator and one calculator) at several intervals across the course of year 10 and 11.

Further Mathematics

Higher attaining students in Year 10 are given the opportunity to study the Level 2 certificate in Further Mathematics during a weekly session after school.

This helps with their GCSE maths studies as well as giving them the chance to attain an extra GCSE if they choose to sit the exam. The course is particularly appropriate for those students who may wish to study mathematics at A level

Career opportunities

Economist
Digital games developer
Stockbroker
Meteorologist
Doctor
Pharmacist
Architect
Engineer
Civil engineer
Structural engineer
Software developer
Teacher
Accountant
Data Analyst

Useful websites

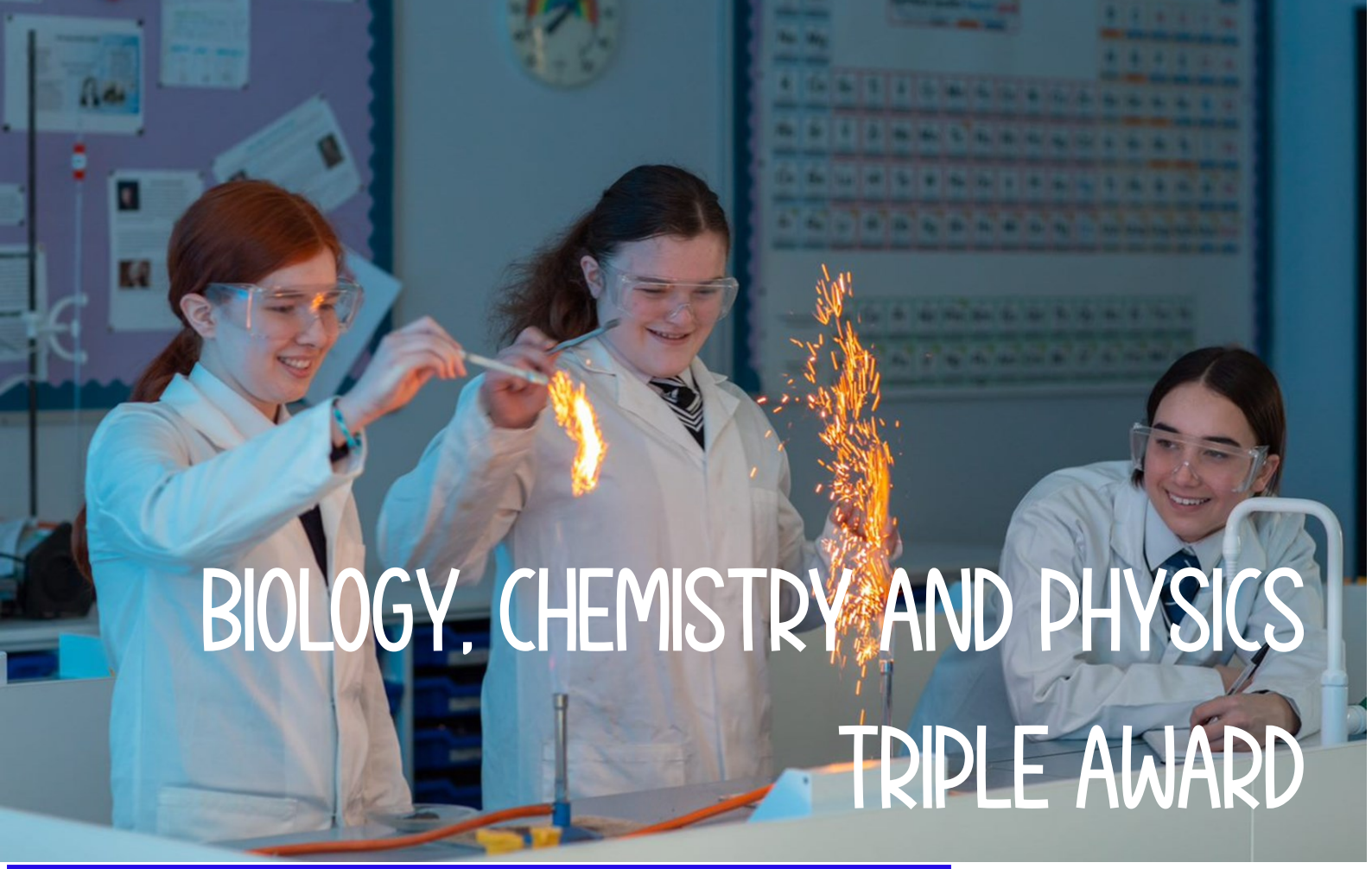
www.corbettmaths.com

www.mathsgenie.co.uk

www.onmaths.com

GCSE BBC Bitesize

For more information, please contact Mrs J Donaldson or Mrs E Turner on Janine.Donaldson@stdominicspriory.co.uk and Elaine.Turner@stdominicspriory.co.uk



BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY AND PHYSICS TRIPLE AWARD

Course Description:

This option course is for students who have an interest in science and want to achieve three separate GCSE s.
This option complements the science study and skills learnt in the compulsory science lessons and allows time for wider study and more practical content. They also offer the greatest access to science-based, further/ higher education courses.

Biology:

Cell biology; Organisation; Infection and response; Bioenergetics; Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, variation and evolution; Ecology; Key ideas

Chemistry:

Atomic structure and the Periodic Table; Bonding, structure and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry; Chemical changes; Energy changes; The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis; Chemistry of the atmosphere; Using resources; Key ideas.

Physics:

Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; Atomic structure; Forces; Waves; Magnetism and electromagnetism; Space physics.

GCSE Breakdown:

100% exam based

AQA Exam board

3 GCSE's in biology, chemistry & physics

Key Dates

Mocks – First half of year 10 and Year 11

Exam entry level agreed- January of Year 11

GCSE exams start May in Year 11

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants."

Isaac Newton

Assessment Methods:

Students sit two written papers for each subject at end of Year 11. In biology and physics, Paper 1 assesses topics 1-4 , with chemistry assessment across topics 1-5.

Paper 2 in each subject assesses the remaining topics.

Each paper carries 50% of the final grade and there are two levels of entry (foundation / higher tier).

Each paper is 1 hr 45 minutes long and is a mixture of multiple -choice, structured closed short answer and open answer responses. Questions in Paper 2 may draw on fundamental concepts and principles across topics from Paper 1.

The papers may draw on learning and skills from practical experience within the course structure and students are expected to gain a rich practical experience which includes 8-10 required practical activities in each subject.

Students who are sitting the foundation papers may be awarded a grade 1-5. Students sitting a higher tier paper may be awarded a grade 4-9. The entry level can differ between the sciences depending upon the ability, giving students more flexibility than the dual award and improved access to further education courses.

Course codes: 8461, 8462, 8463

Resources & Wider Learning

Each student is given access to a textbook, workbook and revision guide in each of the 3 subjects.

Career opportunities

Doctor / Dentist / Veterinarian
Zoology / Marine / Nature Conservation
Medical physics / pharmacology
Food & Health Science
Biophysics / Biochemist
Nanotechnology
Forensics
Environmental science
Astronomy
Software development
All types of engineering
Geophysicist / Meteorologist
Business, Finance & Law
Physical Education
Teaching

Useful websites

www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize
www.physicsandmathstutor.com
www.stem.org.uk
www.twinkl.com
www.phet.colorado.edu
www.gcsepod.com
www.spark.iop.org
www.revisechemistry.co.uk
www.savemyexams.com

Video Learning Aides:

Cognito Science
Fuse School
Free Science Lessons
Emma the Teachie

For more information please contact : Mrs Burge - Chemistry, Mrs Nevitt — Biology or Mrs Dykes -Physics

GCSE COMBINED SCIENCE TRILOGY

Course Description:

Most students will study this balanced science course, if they have not selected the triple science option. Students will gain 2 GCSE's awarded on a 17 point scale from 1-1 to 9-9.

Biology:

Cell biology; Organisation; Infection and response; Bioenergetics; Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, variation and evolution; Ecology

Chemistry:

Atomic structure and the Periodic Table; Bonding, structure and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry; Chemical changes; Energy changes; The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis; Chemistry of the atmosphere; Using resources.

Physics:

Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; Atomic structure; Forces; Waves; Magnetism and electromagnetism.

GCSE Breakdown:

100% exam based

AQA Exam board

2 GCSE's in Science

Key Dates

Mocks – First half of year 10 and Year 11

Exam entry level agreed- January of Year 11

GCSE exams start May in Year 11

"Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less."

Marie Curie

Assessment Methods:

Students sit two written papers for each subject at end of Year 11, giving a total of six papers. Each paper carries 16.7% of the final grade and there are two levels of entry (foundation /higher tier).

Each paper is 1 hr 15 minutes long and is a mixture of multiple -choice, structured closed short answer and open answer responses. Questions in Paper 2 may draw on fundamental concepts and principles across topics from Paper 1.

The papers may draw on learning and skills from practical experience within the course structure and students are expected to gain a rich practical experience which includes 21 required practical activities.

Students who are sitting the foundation papers may be awarded a grade 1-5. Students sitting a higher tier paper may be awarded a grade 4-9. worldwide

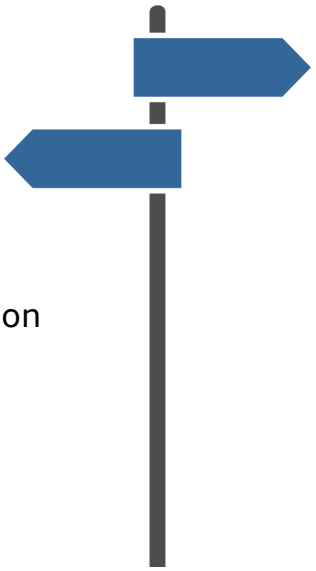
Course codes: 8464

Resources & Wider Learning

Each student is given access to a textbook, workbook and revision guide in each of the 3 subjects.

Career opportunities

Nurse practitioner / Paramedic
Medical physics
Food & Health Science
Biophysics / Biochemist
Nanotechnology
Forensics
Environmental science
Software development
All types of engineering
Geophysicist
Marine / Nature Conservation
Physical Education
Business & Finance
Law
Education



Useful websites

www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize
www.physicsandmathstutor.com
www.stem.org.uk
www.twinkl.com
www.phet.colorado.edu
www.gcsepod.com
www.spark.iop.org
www.revisechemistry.co.uk
www.savemyexams.com

Video Learning Aides:

Cognito Science
Fuse School
Free Science Lessons
Emma the Teachie

For more information please contact : Mrs Burge - Chemistry, Mrs Nevitt— Biology or Mrs Dykes -Physics

IGCSE COMBINED SCIENCE
SINGLE AWARD SCIENCE

Course Description:

This is a unique offering to students who either struggle with science, have the need to devote more of their time to core subjects such as maths & English or need a reduced amount of exam pressure. Students still study all three sciences (meeting current UK education requirements) in the topics below, and achieve one GCSE in Science.

Biology:

Living Organisms; Cells, Molecules, Enzymes; Nutrition; Transportation; Disease & Immunity; Drugs; Reproduction; Gas Exchange, Respiration; Coordination & Response; Inheritance & Variation; Environment & Ecosystems

Chemistry:

States of Matter; Atoms, Elements & Compounds; Stoichiometry; Electrochemistry; Chemical Energetics & Reactions; Acids, Bases & Salts; Organic Chemistry; Chemistry of the Environment; a Periodic Table; Experimental techniques and chemical analysis .

Physics:

Forces & Motion; Energy, Work & Power; Thermal Physics; Waves, Light & Sound; Electricity & Magnetism, Nuclear Physics; Space

Cambridge IGCSE is comparable to the standard of other GCSE in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge IGCSE qualifications are accepted as equivalent to UK GCSE's by leading universities worldwide.

GCSE Breakdown:

100% exam based

Cambridge International Exam (CIE) board

1 GCSE in Science A*-G

Key Dates

Mocks—First half of year 10 and Year 11

Exam entry level agreed- January of Year 11

GCSE' exams start early May in Year 11

"Science is simply the word we use to describe a method of organising our curiosity"

Tim Minchin

Assessment Methods:

Students sit 3 x written papers at the end of Year 11. Each paper is a combination of all three subjects and carries a different weighting towards the final grade. Each level of entry will include:

- 45-minute multiple-choice paper worth 30% of the final grade.
- 1 hour 15 minute theory paper, worth 50% of the final grade.
- 1 hour alternative to practical (written) paper worth 20% of the final grade.

Students who are expected to gain a grade D (equivalent grade 4) or below would be entered at core level and have access to grades G to C. Students who are expected to gain a grade C (grade 5) or above would be entered at extended level and have access to grades G to A*. The difference between the two levels is examined by differentiated multiple-choice and theory papers.

Resources & Wider Learning

Each student is given their own textbook and workbook in each of the three subjects.

As well as a school trip to GCSE Science Live!. Students would benefit visiting the following places outside school: Science Museum, London; Eden Project, Cornwall; Science & Industry Museum, Manchester; National Railway museum, York; Magna Science Adventure Centre, Rotherham; Life Science Centre, Newcastle; At-Bristol; Spaceport, Merseyside; Eureka! In Halifax & Wallasey

Career opportunities

Nurse / Paramedic
Animal care / Farming
Marine / Nature Conservation
Medical physics / pharmacology
Food & Health Science
Environmental science
Engineering
Health & Beauty
Physical Education
Business & Finance
Sales & Marketing
Education
Hospitality & Catering
Administration

Useful websites

www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize
www.physicsandmathstutor.com
www.stem.org.uk
www.twinkl.com
www.phet.colorado.edu
www.gcsepod.com
www.spark.iop.org
www.revisechemistry.co.uk
www.savemyexams.com

Video Learning Aides:

Cognito Science
Fuse School
Free Science Lessons

For more information please contact : Mrs Burge - Chemistry, Mrs Nevitt — Biology or Mrs Dykes -Physics

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Course Description:

The course content can be viewed in more detail on the Eduqas website but is outlined below:

Component 1: Foundational Catholic Theology

For this component learners will study two themes:

Theme 1: Origins and Meaning Theme 2: Good and Evil

Component 2: Applied Catholic Theology

For this component learners will study two themes:

Theme 3: Life and Death Theme 4: Sin and Forgiveness

Within these themes is coverage of issues that engage young people: science and religion, environmental issues, abortion and euthanasia, crime and punishment. It is anticipated that the course will equip them to discuss these in an informed and balanced manner, and in relation to a number of religious and non-religious viewpoints.

Component 3: Study of a world faith - Judaism

[Throughout the course, students will be required to draw on sources of authority, as well as understand the relevance of art, music and sculpture in some of the topics considered. This means that their general knowledge and appreciation of culture will improve too!]

GCSE Breakdown:

100% exam

Eduqas Exam board

Route B

Key Dates

Final exam at the end of Year 11.

"Aspire not to have more, but to be more"

St Oscar Romero

Assessment Methods:

Students will be assessed by their performance in three written papers at the end of Year 11.

There is equal weighting on all papers in terms of the ability to:

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding (AO1)

Analyse and evaluate (AO2)

Extended Learning

Listening to/watching the news is a good way to enhance learning in a subject that deals with contemporary issues

Dinner table debates are also perfect for embedding knowledge and practising the skills of constructive argument

Visiting the Manchester Jewish Museum in Cheetham Hill or the Jewish Quarter in any major city will allow students to identify Jewish practice as a living faith

Career opportunities

RE is an academically challenging subject. In it we address some of man's biggest questions and discuss some of the most pressing issues of our time.

The ability to form and articulate reasoned argument is an asset for a career in **Law** or **Mediation**.

Learning about the human condition, underpinned by a recognition of the inherent worth of every human life, lends itself to many **Vocational roles**, such as: **Social Worker, Health Sector Worker, Prison Officer, Chaplain, Teacher, Charity Worker.**

Furthermore, a detailed knowledge of two world faiths, as well as understanding a non- religious viewpoint on today's issues, is an asset in any work place in the modern world, from **Journalism** to **International Business**

Useful websites

GCSE Quizlet

GCSE Bitesize

https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/

For more information, please contact Mrs J Cook on Judith.Cook@stdominicspriory.co.uk

Course Description:

Students will study three components to be awarded the Edexcel B GCSE Geography 9-1 qualification.

This qualification has a clear and coherent structure; enquiry based learning, a real world focus, manageable and interesting fieldwork tasks, an easily understood examination presentation and clear connection with the 16-19 Geographical syllabuses.

Component 1: Global Geographical Issues

Topic 1 Hazardous Earth

Topic 2 Development Dynamics

Topic 3 The Challenges of an urbanising world

Component 2: UK Geographical Issues

Topic 4 The UK's evolving physical landscape

Topic 5 The UK's evolving human landscape

Topic 6 Geographical Investigations (Physical and Human Geography fieldwork)

Component 3: People and Environment Issues (Making Geographical Decisions)

Topic 7 People and the Biosphere

Topic 8 Forests under Threat

Topic 9 Consuming energy resources

GCSE Breakdown:

100% exam

Component 1: 37.5%

Component 2: 37.5%

Component 3: 25%

Edexcel B Exam board

Key Dates:

Fieldwork investigations:

June 2027 Birmingham

October 2027 Physical fieldwork (e.g. Rhyl or Cannock Chase)

"Geography is the subject which holds the key to our future"

Michael Palin

Assessment Methods:

Each of the three components of the course are assessed through a written examination.

In Papers 1, 2 and 3 there will be a variety of question types:

-Multiple-choice questions
-Short open responses
-Calculations (with the use of a calculator)
-8-mark extended writing questions; there will also be one 12-mark extended writing question at the end of Paper 3.

Extended Learning opportunities:

-Explore the local area and plan visits to places such as; The Lake District and Birmingham

-Use a range of maps to study areas

-Read books with geographical themes, e.g. Step By Step by Simon Reeve

-Visit websites such as;

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zsytxsg

Career opportunities:

Architect

Environmental Education

Land Surveyor

Professor/Teacher

Community Planner

Hydrologist

Real Estate Developer

Military Services

Business analyst

Civil engineer

Useful websites:

https://www.rgs.org/choose-geography

https://www.rgs.org/choose-geography/choose-a-career-with-geography/why-geographers-are-employable

For more information, please contact Mrs J Longmore on Jo.longmore1@stdominicspriory.co.uk

Course Description:

Conflict and Tension – The First World War 1894 - 1918

Students will study the origins of the war, the key events and turning points, the new technology brought about due to the war and how the war came to an end and led to the Treaty of Versailles.

Germany, 1890 – 1945 - Democracy and Dictatorship

Students will study the rise of the Nazi party post WWI and all of the changes they brought to Germany. We will focus of how the lives of the German people changed and look at events such as World War II and the Holocaust.

The Elizabethans, 1568-1603

Students will study a fascinating time period in English history, looking at the reign of Elizabeth I. We study how Elizabeth shaped England into a world superpower, how the lives of everyday people where changed during this period and changing technologies and entertainment, such as the theatre.

Health and the People c1000 to the present day

Students will learn about how beliefs and cures relating to the causes of illness have change sine the year 1000 up to the present day. Key individuals in medicine and health will be investigated, as well as key factors that drove change and developments, such as religion and communication.

GCSE Breakdown:

AQA exam board

2 papers—no coursework

2 topics on each paper

Key Dates

Both papers for the final exams take place during the exam season in the summer term of Year 11

"We are not makers of History. We are made by History"

Martin Luther King Jnr

Assessment Methods:

Students will sit two exam papers at the end of Year 11.

Each paper consists of two parts.

Paper 1 covers the First World War and Germany, Democracy and Dictatorship.

Paper 2 covers the Elizabethans and Health and the People.

Both papers are equally weighted and are each worth 50% of the final mark.

Coursework

The GCSE History course no longer has a coursework element to it, however, this has been replaced by an historic environment question on the Elizabethan paper. The focus of this question changes each year. Past topics have included the Spanish Armada, Kenilworth castle The Globe and Hardwick Hall.

We are told in advance what the topic will be and we spend 10-15 lessons prepping for the topic which will form the basis for the final question on the Elizabethan paper.

Career opportunities

A-Level/Degree
Heritage roles
Teaching
Law
Medicine
Journalism
The Police force
Tourism
Researcher
Media
Civil Service
Human Resources
Politics
Human Resources

Useful websites

BBC Bitesize

GCSE Pod

https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/gcse/history-8145

For more information, please contact Mrs L York on Lauren.Yorke@stdominicspriory.co.uk

ART AND DESIGN

Course Description:

The course encourages exploration of both two and three-dimensional media, and of techniques like printmaking, textiles, ceramic and mixed media, with observation; drawing, painting and photography at the centre of all experimentation. Students will be encouraged to develop their own ideas in a non-prescriptive and creative environment.

Students may choose to study Art and Design **or** Textiles during the two year course. They will produce one unit of coursework, and one unit of exam work, leading to a 10-hour exam. Their work will be exhibited at the end of the course. Gallery trips will be offered to enhance their knowledge and understanding of visual language.

They will create an exciting body of work exploring 4 key assessment objectives (AO):

AO1 Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.

AO2 Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.

AO3 Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.

GCSE Breakdown:

60% exam

40% coursework

OCR Exam board

Key Dates

Exam Paper released on January 1st.

"Painting is poetry that is seen rather than felt,

and

poetry is painting that is felt rather than seen."

Leonardo da Vinci

Assessment Methods:

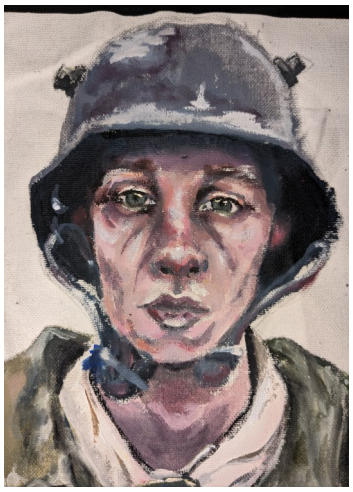
Coursework – 60% of marks

You will have the opportunity to choose your own personal theme and create a portfolio of art work. You will develop, experiment and record your ideas in a variety of creative ways. You will learn skills, whilst developing your knowledge and understanding of 2D and 3D techniques.

Exam work - 40% of marks

A four month period, leading to a 10-hour exam. You will select a theme from the exam paper and create a body of artwork exploring a wide range of materials and techniques.





Career opportunities

Artist
Architect
Animator
Gallery Curator
Fashion Designer
Stage/Theatre Design
Art Teacher
Book illustrator
Fashion Designer
Film/Digital Design
Art Therapy

Useful websites

GCSE Bite size
Pinterest
Saatchiart.com


For more information, please contact Miss J Jovanovic on Jane.Jovanovic@stdominicspriory.co.uk

Course Description:

From small enterprises to large multinationals, students develop an understanding of businesses, their behaviour and decision making right from the get-go. They learn about the dynamic nature of business activity, influences on business, business operations, finance, marketing and human resources.

Students use and respond to quantitative and qualitative data in making business decisions as they investigate, analyse and evaluate business opportunities/issues. As well as developing problem solving and decision making skills, so they can make recommendations relevant to the commercial environment.

Whilst building on existing numeracy, literacy and digital skills students also work on presentation skills, teamwork and other practical abilities. Consequently, the course helps prepare students for their next steps whether that's more academic study, a practical career focused course, a new technical qualification with industrial placement or apprenticeship.

GCSE business is therefore regarded a hugely accessible, valuable and useful course for young people.

Extended Learning Opportunities:

Weekly homework is set as part of the course, however students are encouraged to research companies, listen to podcasts on BBC Sounds or watch BBC Business news, Inside the Factory, Dragons Den and other business documentary programmes.

GCSE Breakdown

100% exam

AQA Exam board

Key Dates

Year 10

Mock Exams— First half of the year

Work Experience—June

Year 11

Mock Exams—First half of the year

GCSE exams—May/June

Business Insight

"You never learn from success, but you do learn from failure."

Steve Jobs

Co-founder, Apple.

Assessment Method:

There are six topic areas, assessed over two exam papers, at the end of the two year course

Paper 1: 1 hour 45 minutes	**Paper 2: 1 hour 45 minutes**
90 marks	90 marks
50% of GCSE	50% GCSE
Business in the real world	Business in the real world
Influences on business	Influences on business
Business operations	Marketing
Human resources	Finance

Both papers consist of multiple choice questions, short answer questions and case study or data response questions, plus students can use calculators.

Aims of the subject:

In every lesson students are learning business terminology and understanding concepts. This **knowledge** is then applied to contemporary business issues and different types of business on a local, national or global scale to see how firms respond, adapt and compete.

Students **analyse and evaluate** business ideas, drawing on evidence to make **informed decisions and solve business problems.** Everyone develops as enterprising individuals with the ability to think commercially and creatively. Investigating real business opportunities, applying quantitative skills to business and using there ability to interpret data.

Students mature into effective, independent, critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds who make **justified business recommendations or conclusions**.

Career opportunities/Next Steps:

- **Business A Level** followed by a University degree or National Diploma.
- **Business BTEC** which is a vocational qualification. Practical study. Career focused.
- **Business, Accounting, Administration, Customer Service are all areas with T Levels.** New technical-based qualifications with employers and businesses.
- **Business Apprenticeships are** paid jobs, with time in a classroom, offering relevant work experience and a nationally recognised qualification.
- **Entrepreneur** start up your own business.

Useful websites

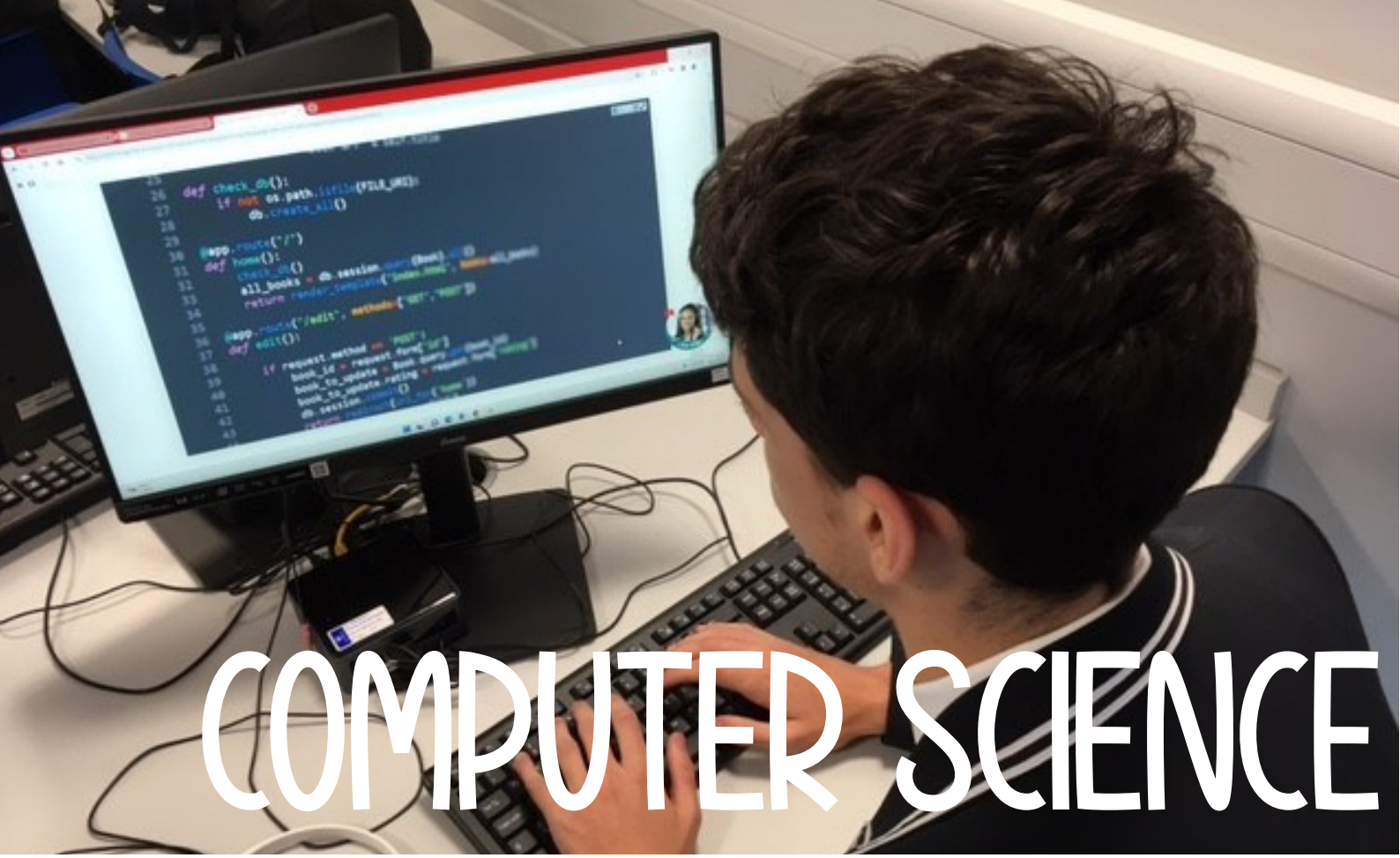
www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize

www.tutor2u.net/business

www.senecalearning.com

For more information, please contact Miss Shelton or email

Rachel.Shelton@stdominicspriory.co.uk



COMPUTER SCIENCE

Course Description:

GCSE Computer Science is an exciting and practical course, encouraging creativity and problem-solving. Students develop their understanding & application of the core concepts. They analyse problems in computational terms and devise solutions by writing, testing & evaluating programs.

Component 01: Computer systems

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

Component 02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

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

Practical programming

Students are to be given the opportunity to undertake programming tasks during their course of study. It allows them to develop their skills designing and refining programs using Python — a high-level programming language.

GCSE Breakdown

100% exam

OCR Exam board

Key Dates

Year 10

Mock Exams— First half of the year

Work Experience—June

Year 11

Mock Exams—First half of the year

GCSE exams—May

Computers Insight

"Success in creating effective AI, could be the biggest event in the history of our civilization. Or the worst. We just don't know."

Stephen Hawking

Assessment Method:

There are six topic areas, assessed over two exam papers, at the end of the two-year course

- **Paper 1: J277/01: Computer systems**

  Written paper: 1 hour and 30 minutes

  Multi-choice questions, short answer response questions and extended response questions

- **Paper 2: J277/02: Computational Thinking/Algorithms/Programming**

  Written paper: 1 hour and 30 minutes

  This paper has two sections. In Section B, questions assess students' ability to write or refine algorithms using Python — the high-level computer language.

Aims of the subject:

1. To understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation.
2. To analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs.
3. To think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically.
4. To understand the components that make up digital systems, how they communicate with one another and with other systems.
5. To understand the impact of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy and cybersecurity.

Career opportunities/Next Steps:

Computer Science A Level onto University degree or National Diploma. Almost 80% of graduates take up employment in IT, retail trade, manufacturing, technical & education

BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma vocational qualification. Practical study.

T Levels are new technical-based qualifications with employers and businesses, includes digital production, design & development, Computing & ICT or Games Developer.

Computing and IT apprenticeships are paid jobs. You learn for 20% of time in a classroom, get experience & a nationally recognised qualification.

Employment Areas Inc. information systems, software engineering, artificial intelligence, cyber-security, health informatics, digital community management, data analyst or communications.

Useful websites

www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize

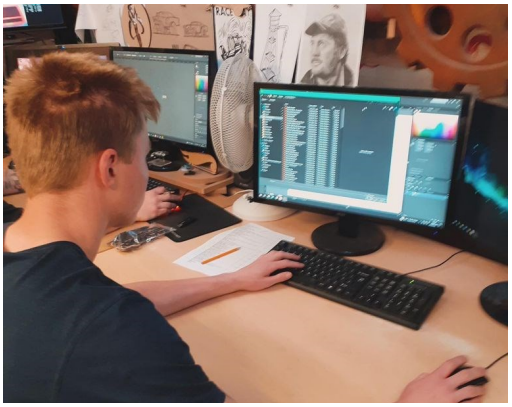
www.advanced-ict.info

www.senecalearning.com

www.ocr.org.uk

Craigndave on YouTube

www.time2code.today



For more information, please contact Miss Shelton or email

Rachel.Shelton@stdominicspriory.co.uk

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Course Description:

The Design and Technology course covers the use of woods, metals, polymers, systems, electronics, card/graphics and fabrics/textiles in a single qualification.

Within the course you will learn about the following topics

- Understanding users, their needs and their characteristics
- Designing
- Using testing, evaluation and the views of users to improve designs
- Learning about materials
- Analysing products
- Learning how things work

How will you learn?

- Lessons will be split into theory work and practical work. Theory lessons is where we will cover all the required topics for your exam. Lessons will be made up on note taking, practical learning, group discussions and group assignments.
- In year 10 practical lessons will consist of small mini make projects which will continue to develop your skill level and widen your knowledge in different techniques. At the end of year 10 these practical lessons will move to coursework lessons, following the release of the exam board briefs.

GCSE Breakdown:

50% exam (2 hours)
50% coursework

AQA Exam board

Key Dates

Coursework briefs are released 1st June in Year 10. Final hand in is during Easter in Year 11

"Design and Technology is a phenomenally important subject. Logical, creative and practical, it's the only opportunity students have to apply what they learn in Maths and Science."

Sir James Dyson Founder and Chairman of Dyson and Patron to the D&T Association

Assessment Methods:

Assessment for the GCSE course involves an examination and a coursework assessment.

Coursework - 50% of the overall GCSE Grade. This is a time-limited practical assignment completed where pupils will design and make a product to fit a specific 'problem'. This consists of an electronic portfolio of evidence, alongside a high-quality product that students manufacture. The coursework will commence with investigations into the 'problem' and finding a client to base the coursework on. Followed by design ideas, modelling and design development. Then the final piece is manufactured before it is tested and evaluated.

Exam- 50% of the overall GCSE Grade. This is a two hour theory paper. It is based on the principles covered throughout the course and specific topics covered during the non-exam assessment. Topics include new and emerging technologies, developments in new materials, systems approach to designing, mechanical devices, ecological and social footprint and scales of production

Coursework

The exam board releases three briefs on the 1st June each year. The 'briefs' change each year, example briefs include 'design and make a storage unit for a personal procession' or 'design and make a light for a teenagers bedroom'. Pupils briefly look into all 3 briefs before picking their favourite brief to focus on.

Pupils create a 40 A4 page presentation on their coursework, which includes research, design ideas, development, modelling, a making diary and testing and evaluation. Along with their final product, which answers the design brief they have chosen.

Career opportunities

Designer (product, textiles, clothing, automotive, graphic, interior, etc)
Architect
Engineer
Manufacturing
Craftsmanship
Silversmith
Teacher
Military Services
Civil engineer
Construction
Advertising
Film props
Stage design
Costume designer
The possibilities are endless!

Useful websites

www.technologystudent.com
www.designmuseum.org
GCSE Pod
GCSE Bite size

For more information, please contact Mrs H Brackstone on Hayley.Brackstone@stdominicspriory.co.uk

Course Description:

The OCR GCSE Music course requires students to practically apply knowledge and understanding, including musical vocabulary and notation as appropriate to context, through the skills of:

- Performing
- Composing
- Appraising

The course also requires students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the musical elements, musical contexts and musical language and allow them to apply these to their own work when performing and composing.

The following topics will be covered:

- Area of Study 1 My Music
- Area of Study 2 The Concerto through Time
- Area of Study 3 Rhythms of the World
- Area of Study 4 Film Music
- Area of Study 5 Conventions of Pop

GCSE Breakdown:

60% non exam assessment

40% written exam

OCR Exam board

Key Dates

Coursework briefs for the composition are released 1st September (Year 11)

Written exam is in May/ June (Year 11)

"With music, one's whole future life is brightened. This is such a treasure in life that it helps us over many troubles and difficulties. Music multiplies all that is beautiful and of value in life."

Zoltan Kodaly

Assessment Methods:

Coursework - 60% of the overall GCSE Grade.

Students should prepare and record a solo performance and an ensemble performance on any instrument (including voice). Students are also expected to compose a piece of their own choice and a piece that is set to a brief by OCR.

Exam– 40% of the overall GCSE Grade.

This is a ninety minute listening paper. The purpose of the examination is to assess aural perception and understanding of the content of the Areas of Study 2–5 (see course description). A contrasting selection of musical extracts from the Areas of Study will be used.

Coursework

Integrated coursework: 30%

Learners' understanding will be assessed through:

- a SOLO performance
- a composition of their own choice

Practical component: 30%

Learners' understanding will be assessed through:

- an ENSEMBLE performance
- a composition to a brief set by OCR September (year 11)

Career opportunities

Teacher
Performer
Composer
Artist management
Events management
Publisher
Sound engineer
TV/ radio presenter

Useful websites

www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zv7gxyc

www.teoria.com/en/exercises/

http://www.philharmonia.co.uk/explore/resources

For more information, please contact Mrs K Gardner on Kirsty.Gardner@stdominicspriory.co.uk

PERFORMING ARTS

Course Description:

The vocational award gives learners the opportunity to develop sector-specific applied knowledge and skills through realistic vocational contexts. Students will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and technical skills in the following areas:

- development of key skills that prove their aptitude in performing arts, such as reproducing repertoire and responding to stimuli
- processes that underpin effective ways of working in the performing arts, such as development of ideas, rehearsal and performance
- attitudes that are considered most important in the performing arts, including personal management and communication
- knowledge that underpins effective use of skills, processes and attitudes in the sector, such as roles, responsibilities, performance disciplines and styles.

How will you learn?

- Lessons will be split into theory work and practical work. Students will work independently and as part of a group.

GCSE Breakdown:

100% coursework

Exam board: Eduqas

Key Dates

Coursework briefs are released as follows:

Unit 1—January (Year 10)

Unit 2—September (Year 11)

Unit 3—January (Year 11)

"The arts are an essential element of education, just like reading, writing, and arithmetic...music, dance, and theatre are all keys that unlock profound human understanding and accomplishment"

William Bennett

Assessment Methods:

Unit 1: Performing (Non-exam internal assessment) 30%

This unit enables students to gain a holistic knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to reproduce an existing piece(s) of professional/published work. This unit can be completed through any one of the following disciplines: Drama, Music, Music Technology, Musical Theatre

Unit 2: Creating (Non-exam internal assessment) 30%

This unit enables learners to gain, develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to create and refine original work in the performing arts. This unit can be completed through any one of the following disciplines from either performance or production.

Unit 3: Responding to a brief (Task set and marked by Eduqas) 40%

Coursework

The exam board releases three briefs over the two years.

Unit 1 This unit can be completed through any one of the following disciplines: Drama, Music, Music Technology, Musical Theatre

Unit 2 This unit can be completed through any one of the following disciplines from either performance or production: Devised drama; Choreography; Composition; Composition using technology; Costume design; Lighting design; Sound design; Make-up and hair design; Set design

Unit 3 Responding to a brief and presenting a pitch.

This unit introduces learners to areas of the performing arts that need to be considered when responding to an industry commission

Career opportunities

Level 3 vocational qualifications such as performing arts, music, music technology, media and dance.

Actor

Animator

Choreographer

Dancer

Musician

Set designer

Theatre director

Sound/lighting engineer

Arts administrator

Producer

Useful websites

Students are encouraged to listen to a wide variety of musical genres, to watch a wide range of films, musical theatre, drama and dance. Any specific websites will be given during the course.

For more information, please contact Mrs K Gardner on Kirsty.Gardner@stdominicspriory.co.uk

BTEC TECH AWARD SPORT

Course Description:

Learners are required to complete and achieve all three components in the qualification.

Component One - Preparing Participants to Take Part in Sport and Physical Activity (30%)

- Explore types and provision of sport and physical activity for different types of participant
- Examine equipment and technology required for participants to use when taking part in sport and physical activity
- Be able to prepare participants to take part in sport and physical activity.

Component Two - Taking Part and Improving Other Participants Sporting Performance (30%)

- Understand how different components of fitness are used in different physical activities
- Be able to participate in sport and understand the roles and responsibilities of officials
- Demonstrate ways to improve participants sporting techniques.

Component Three - Developing Fitness to Improve Other Participants Performance in Sport and Physical Activity (40%)

- Demonstrate knowledge of facts, components of fitness, fitness tests, training methods/ processes/principles in relation to improving fitness in sport and exercise
- Demonstrate an understanding of facts, components of fitness, fitness tests, training methods/processes/principles in relation to improving fitness in sport and exercise
- Apply an understanding of facts, components of fitness, fitness tests, training methods/ processes/principles in relation to improving fitness in sport and exercise
- Make connections with concepts, facts, components of fitness, fitness tests, training methods/processes/principles in relation to improving fitness in sport and exercise

BTEC Tech Sport Breakdown:

2 x 30% Coursework Set Assignment

1 x 40% exam (1 hr 30 min)

Edexcel Exam board

Key Dates

Component 1 Feb/Mar Year 10

Component 2 Sep/Oct Year 11

Component 3 Exam May/ June Year 11

"Set your goals high, and don't stop till you get there."

Bo Jackson

Assessment Methods:

Components 1 and 2 are assessed through non-exam internal assessment. There is one external assessment, Component 3, which provides the main synoptic assessment for the qualification. Component 3 builds directly on Components 1 and 2 and enables learning to be brought together and related to a real-life situation. The external assessment takes the form of an external assessment taken under supervised conditions, which is then marked and a grade awarded by Pearson.

Coursework—Set assignments

Pupils Receive approx. 14 weeks of content learning and are then set an assignment which will take approx. 6 weeks to complete. This assignment is marked and moderated internally and then moderated again by the exam board. Some of this work will be video evidence of leading a warmup, demonstrating practical sport skills and competing in a competitive situation. Some the assignment will be completed on computer through different formats such as WORD, POWERPOINT or PUBLISHER.

Career opportunities

Sport scientist / analysis
PE teacher
Physiotherapist / Sports Therapy
Professional sportsperson
Sports coach/consultant
Sports at local and national level
Diet and fitness instructor
Personal trainer

Useful websites

www.theeverlearner.com
GCSE Pod

For more information, please contact Mr E Blake on Elliott.Blake@stdominicspriory.co.uk

Course Description:

The specification covers three distinct themes. These themes apply to all four skill areas.

Students are expected to understand and provide information and opinions about these themes relating to their own experiences and those of other people, including people in countries/communities where French is spoken.

Students study all of the following themes on which the assessments are based:

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

Theme 1 covers the following three topics: • Topic 1: Identity and relationships with others • Topic 2: Healthy living and lifestyle • Topic 3: Education and work

Theme 2: Popular culture Theme 2 covers the following three topics: • Topic 1: Free-time activities • Topic 2: Customs, festivals and celebrations • Topic 3: Celebrity culture

Theme 3 covers the following three topics: • Topic 1: Travel and tourism, including places of interest • Topic 2: Media and technology • Topic 3: The environment and where people live

GCSE Breakdown:

100% exam

AQA Exam board

Key Dates

The speaking exam will be in April of Year 11.

"Learning another language is like becoming another person"

Haruki Murukami

Assessment Methods:

All assessments will be through examination at the end of Year 11. All four examination papers must be taken at the same tier.

Higher Tier: Grades 3-9 **Foundation Tier**: Grades 1-5

Paper 1: Listening

What's assessed • Understanding and responding to spoken extracts comprising the defined vocabulary and grammar for each tier • Dictation of short, spoken extracts

Higher Tier: 45 minutes	50 marks	25% of GCSE
Foundation Tier: 35 minutes	40 marks	25% of GCSE

Paper 2: Speaking

What's assessed • Speaking using clear and comprehensible language to undertake a Role-play Carry out a Reading aloud task • Talk about visual stimuli

Higher tier: 10-12 minutes	50 marks	25% of GCSE
Foundation Tier: 7-9 minutes	50 marks	25% of GCSE

Paper 3: Reading

What's assessed • Understanding and responding to written texts which focus predominantly on the vocabulary and grammar at each tier • Inferring plausible meanings of single words when they are embedded in written sentences • Translating from French into English

Higher Tier:	1 hour	50 marks	25% of GCSE
Foundation Tier:	45 mins	50 marks	25% of GCSE

Paper 4: Writing

What's assessed • Writing text in the language in a lexically and grammatically accurate way in response to simple and familiar stimuli • Translating from English into French

Higher Tier:	1h 15 mins	50 marks	25% of GCSE
Foundation Tier:	1h 10 mins	50 marks	25% of GCSE

Educational Visits

A study visit to France every other year, where pupils can experience first hand the culture of the country and practise the language with native speakers.

Career opportunities

Flight attendant
Screen writer
Marketing manager
First Responder
Diplomat
Travel Blogger
Lawyer
Engineer
Teacher
Translator

Useful websites

GCSE Pod

GCSE Bite size

Kerboodle

For more information, please contact Mrs K Hesp or Mrs T Gauvin on Karen.Hesp@stdominicspriory.co.uk and Tracey.Gauvin@stdominicspriory.co.uk

Course Description:

The specification covers three distinct themes. These themes apply to all four skill areas.

Students are expected to understand and provide information and opinions about these themes relating to their own experiences and those of other people, including people in countries/communities where Spanish is spoken.

Students study all of the following themes on which the assessments are based:

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

Theme 1 covers the following three topics: • Topic 1: Identity and relationships with others • Topic 2: Healthy living and lifestyle • Topic 3: Education and work

Theme 2: Popular culture Theme 2 covers the following three topics: • Topic 1: Free-time activities • Topic 2: Customs, festivals and celebrations • Topic 3: Celebrity culture

Theme 3 covers the following three topics: • Topic 1: Travel and tourism, including places of interest • Topic 2: Media and technology • Topic 3: The environment and where people live

GCSE Breakdown:

100% exam

AQA Exam board

Key Dates

The speaking exam will be in April of Year 11.

“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart”

Nelson Mandela

Assessment Methods:

All assessments will be through examination at the end of Year 11. All four examination papers must be taken at the same tier. (**Higher Tier**: Grades 3-9 / **Foundation Tier**: Grades 1-5)

Paper 1: Listening

What's assessed • Understanding and responding to spoken extracts comprising the defined vocabulary and grammar for each tier • Dictation of short, spoken extracts

Higher Tier: 45 minutes	50 marks	25% of GCSE
Foundation Tier: 35 minutes	40 marks	25% of GCSE

Paper 2: Speaking

What's assessed • Speaking using clear and comprehensible language to undertake a Role-play Carry out a Reading aloud task • Talk about visual stimuli

Higher tier: 10-12 minutes	50 marks	25% of GCSE
Foundation Tier: 7-9 minutes	50 marks	25% of GCSE

Paper 3: Reading

What's assessed • Understanding and responding to written texts which focus predominantly on the vocabulary and grammar at each tier • Inferring plausible meanings of single words when they are embedded in written sentences • Translating from French into English

Higher Tier:	1 hour	50 marks	25% of GCSE
Foundation Tier:	45 mins	50 marks	25% of GCSE

Paper 4: Writing

What's assessed • Writing text in the language in a lexically and grammatically accurate way in response to simple and familiar stimuli • Translating from English into French

Higher Tier:	1h 15 mins	50 marks	25% of GCSE
Foundation Tier:	1h 10 mins	50 marks	25% of GCSE

Educational Visits

A study visit to Spain every other year, where pupils can experience first hand the culture of the country and practise the language with native speakers.

Career opportunities

Flight attendant
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Marketing manager
First Responder
Diplomat
Travel Blogger
Lawyer
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Useful websites

GCSE Pod

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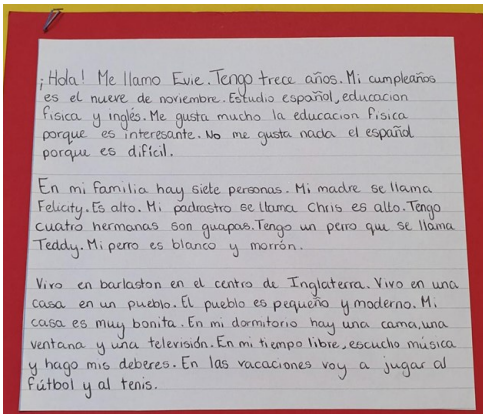


For more information, please contact Mrs V Ford

Vicky.Ford@stdominicspriory.co.uk

ADVICE FROM MRS HARRISON

Selecting your GCSE options can be quite difficult and stressful and there will be plenty of people along the way offering you their advice and support. Choice is never easy, so I have listed 10 simple things to help you select the best for you.

1. Your future ... your choice
You will find many people will have opinions about your choices. I do advise that you listen to the advice of your parents and teachers - but ultimately it will be you sitting the exam, so go for what you'd like to do. Further down the line when workload is heavy you'll appreciate enjoying a subject and looking forward to it, rather than dreading lessons. It also means you will probably work harder in it and get a higher grade. Look at both the content of the course and the skills required and decide if you're interested in the things you will be learning about and whether you can build on the skills you will use.

2. Look at the mark scheme
Some GCSE subjects, such as art, design and technology and performing arts are based almost or partly on coursework. If you're not keen on taking exams at the end of the year then you may want to move away from subjects that depend significantly on your exam results.

3. Are you good at certain subjects
Think about the subjects you are good at, particularly since these are the ones you are more likely to enjoy. Being good at one or more subjects can help you with your workload over the next couple of years, as you will be able to complete the work more quickly and achieve better results. If you're not sure how good you are at a subject, talk to your teacher(s) and ask for their advice. Your teachers should be able to advise you on how well they think you could do in that subject. Also, the subjects you have a natural flair for might inform your career decisions further down the line.

4. Think about your career
This is a simple one but very important. It's almost certain that subjects you take at A-Level or BTEC courses, T-Levels and apprenticeships, will have to be part of your options at GCSE. If you want to go on that far, what subjects do you see yourself taking? This long term thinking also applies to university and careers. It can be scary to think that far ahead but spend a little time dreaming. What would you like to do with your life?

5. Strike a balance
Choose good GCSE options that will look balanced. If you love the arts, find a subject like history or a language alongside it. The reason for balance is not to please teachers or planners, it's just a way of keeping your options open. As your school career progresses, you may find you have gifts you never dreamed of. Try not to shut too many doors too soon.

6. Choose the subject not the teacher
I am sure you have your favourite and not so favourite teachers. You may choose a subject because of a great teacher - but think hard. In the long term teachers will change but it is the subject that will carry you through.

7. Don't pick what your friends are doing

Try not to just choose subjects that your friends are taking - doing different classes won't affect your social circle and will give you plenty to talk about when you do meet up! You will always have friends suggesting you do the same subjects as them. Remember - you will be studying it for the next two years, so make sure it's a subject you like, not one your friend likes!

8. Get advice from the right sources

Everyone has an opinion, but try to listen to:

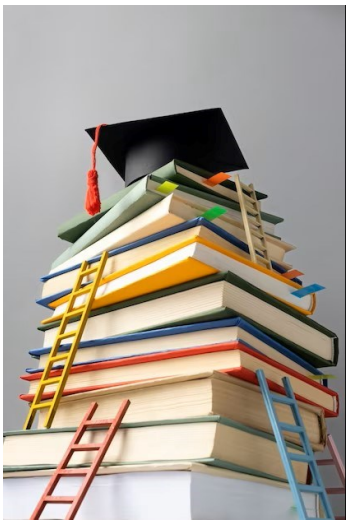
Teachers at your school - they are well-placed to offer you support, so do talk to them if you have any questions about your GCSEs and how it all works.

Careers advisors - they are trained professionals and can prepare you to help you with your career plans and GCSE choices, as well as answer any questions you may have.

Parents - although they might not understand the new points system etc. they are the people that know you best and can offer useful advice.

Friends - they will be going through the same dilemma and you may want to run ideas past them... but it's important to remember that the final decision rests with you alone.

Online forums - can also be useful, as they contain lots of discussion from GCSE students going through the same decision process. The Student Room is a good place to start.



9 Universities normally only require core subjects

Most universities require you to have completed GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics but these are compulsory so you don't need to worry about them. For many undergraduate degrees, GCSE and A-Level subjects aren't too much of an issue. For example, most universities don't mind which subjects you've studied before, if you want to do Law. They just want to see that you have done well. In some cases, you'll need specific A-Levels (and therefore the GCSEs you need to be able to do those A-Levels) to get on certain university courses (e.g. the sciences, history or foreign languages).

10. Getting good grades isn't everything

If you want to give yourself a wide range of options after school, getting good grades is (unfortunately) fairly important. Universities and colleges only accept 9-4 GCSE pass grades for most of their courses. If you think you might struggle to achieve these higher pass grades, ask for support from teachers in choosing a set of GCSE options that will help you focus on your strengths and what you most enjoy. If you enjoy a subject, you're more likely to do your best and perform better in it. You'll still want to get a balance between what you'll most enjoy studying for two years and what will be most useful.

The good news is that there are an increasing number of options out there, even if you didn't get good grades in your GCSEs. Nowadays, there are so many more apprenticeships, T-Levels etc. that can be really flexible in their academic requirements. Aim for the best grades you can but don't make yourself ill with worry – there are still options out there for you if things don't work out the way you planned.

Stay calm!

Finally, try and stay calm. Try not to get too stressed out about choosing your GCSE subjects. Remember - everyone else around you is in the same boat and it's highly likely that later on most people will wish they hadn't picked one or two of their subjects. However, these aren't exactly life-changing decisions.

GCSEs are an opportunity to better yourself, so the best thing you can do is carry on. It's tough making your GCSE choices but once you've made a list and settled on your final subjects, you will feel much better going forward.

Best of luck, and we hope our advice has been helpful in making your decisions a little easier!

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