The national landscape for qualifications has changed and the standards expected of students in external examinations are now higher than ever. With this in mind, our curriculum model has been carefully designed to maximise students’ achievement and make them desirable candidates for Sixth Form Centres, Universities and ultimately, employers.

Alongside this set of courses our Character Education programme, SEARCH ethos, Citizenship and PSHCE programmes actively promote the broader personal development of students. These values are integral to our success as a school in shaping students into adults who not only have excellent qualifications, but also the character to succeed and lead happy, healthy lives.

A warm welcome from our Head of School, Elen Roberts

We are driven by a desire to inspire students to find their own individual talents and enable them to develop a passion for their chosen specialisms. Making option choices is an important and exciting decision. These choices are critical in shaping their academic future and career paths so they must be made with careful consideration to maximise individual achievement and to provide the widest possible range of future educational and professional opportunities. Consequently, we provide a lot of information and expert advice to you and your child during this process, so that the optimum curriculum offer can be made for each and every student. We recognise the importance of collaboration between parents/carers and the school to establish the best route for each child, providing the support and encouragement needed at this pivotal stage in their secondary education.

Our school ethos is founded upon high aspirations. We have a track record of delivering excellent results in the core academic subjects of English and Maths and the proportion of students achieving the English Baccalaureate is significantly above national average. A broad curriculum is at the core of what we do.
Planning for the Future

Most students will not have decided on a career path, but many will know which subjects they prefer and are good at giving themselves the widest possible chances and opportunities to achieve.

Expecting to go to university or into high-quality professional training, such as an apprenticeship, is a very important start. Both of these routes rely upon students achieving a good set of qualifications at GCSE level so that they can progress onto A-levels or other suitable Level 3 courses. English and Maths are critical subjects for this progression and it is now a legal requirement that students resit these subjects if they do not achieve a good pass at GCSE on their first attempt. This is why we invest heavily in support of these subjects from the start of Year 7 through to GCSE and have two full-time ‘one to one’ teachers, who provide small group and individual tuition to students who need additional support with literacy or numeracy.

It is important that students consider their options carefully with a view to future educational and career aspirations, as well as their own individual strengths. Parental and school guidance in this process is invaluable in supporting them to make choices which will allow them to thrive and develop their passion for learning.

Pathways Explained

The school offers three distinct pathways: Core, Baccalaureate and Extended.

These are recommended to students and parents and provide the flexibility to design a curriculum package for each student which is tailored to their needs, abilities and potential. Based on your child’s prior and current attainment, we believe that the Core pathway is most suitable for them. The structure of this pathway is shown below.

### Core Pathway

Students who are best suited to the Core pathway study English, English Literature, Maths and Combined Science. This equates to 5 GCSEs. They are then given free choice over their 3 remaining subject choices, meaning they will be entered for 8 GCSEs.

Student will receive additional support in English and Maths to try and ensure that they achieve a Grade 5 in these subjects.

**Core: 25 hours/week**

![Diagram showing Core pathway subjects and hours](image)
### Year 9 Options – Core Pathway

#### Part 1

**Your Details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Parent/Carers' Name</th>
<th>Parent/Carer Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George Brown</td>
<td>Helen Brown</td>
<td>H. Brown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Part 2

**Core Subjects – Compulsory**

- [x] English Language
- [x] English Literature
- [x] Combined Science (2 GCSEs)

#### Part 3

**Select your Options**

Select your preferences by writing 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 next to your preferred subjects. You will be given 3 subjects from your selection. We try to meet as many first choices as possible but this is subject to student numbers and timetabling constraints:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Photography</td>
<td>Creative Media (Cambridge National)</td>
<td>Engineering (V Cert)</td>
<td>Child Development (V Cert)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Core Subjects (Compulsory)

**English Language**

Students will study a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, including literary non-fiction and will learn how to identify the language and structural devices used by writers to achieve specific effects on the reader.

In addition, students will learn to write accurately and skilfully, adapting the style of their writing for different purposes and audiences. The accuracy of students’ spelling, punctuation and grammar makes up 20% of the overall assessment for this GCSE.

Speaking and Listening is a taught component of English Language GCSE but the assessment of Speaking and Listening does not form part of the final examination.

**English Literature**

Students will study a Shakespeare play, a pre-19th century text, modern prose/drama and poetry. They will learn how to identify the language and structural devices used by writers to achieve specific effects on the reader. They will also understand how to link and compare seen and unseen texts.

The accuracy of students’ spelling, punctuation and grammar makes up 5% of the overall assessment for this GCSE.

**Assessment Method:** 100% exam  
**Exam Board:** AQA

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**Mathematics**

The new Maths GCSE covers broader and more challenging subject content. There is greater emphasis on problem solving and mathematical reasoning, with more marks being allocated to these higher-order skills. Students will now be required to memorise formulae. Each paper will have a range of question types, utilising both structured and unstructured questions. Some questions in the papers will be set in context (both mathematical and non-mathematical).

Key topics include: Number, Algebra, Ratio, Proportion and Rates of Change, Geometry and Measure, Probability and Statistics.

**Assessment Method:** 100% exam  
**Exam Board:** Edexcel

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**Core Subjects (Compulsory)**

**Assessment Method:** 100% exam  
**Exam Board:** AQA  

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**Assessment Method:** 100% exam  
**Exam Board:** AQA  

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**Assessment Method:** 100% exam  
**Exam Board:** Edexcel
Science Options (Compulsory)

Combined Science

Students will study key concepts from Biology, Chemistry and Physics. An example of topics is shown below:

**Biology:** Cell biology, organisation of organisms, 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:** Forces, energy, waves, electricity, magnetism and electromagnetism, particle model of matter, atomic structure

In addition, students will carry out 16 compulsory experiments that will then be examined within the exam papers.

**Assessment Method:** 100% exam – six exams, two in each science

**Exam Board:** OCR Gateway A, equivalent to two GCSEs

GCSE Options

Art & Design

Students complete two coursework projects and one exam project.

They work in sketchbooks to develop work towards final pieces in order to meet four assessment objectives:

1. Exploring and developing ideas by referencing other artists
2. Reviewing and refining their skills through experimentation
3. Recording their observations using drawing
4. Writing, and developing personal responses.

Students can work with a range of materials and processes to meet these objectives. This course is ideal for students who want to develop creative and technical skills and make their own creative decisions within a given structure.

**Assessment Method:** 60% coursework, 40% exam

**Exam Board:** Edexcel

Photography

Students complete two photography-based coursework projects and one exam project. They work in sketchbooks to develop work towards final pieces in order to meet four assessment objectives:

1. Exploring and developing ideas by referencing other photographers
2. Reviewing and refining their skills through experimentation
3. Recording their observations using photography, drawing and writing
4. Developing personal responses.

Students can work with analogue and digital photography to meet these objectives. This course is ideal for students who want to develop creative and technical skills, and make their own creative decisions within a given structure.

**Assessment Method:** 60% coursework, 40% exam

**Exam Board:** Edexcel
**GCSE Options**

**Design Technology: Food Preparation & Nutrition**

This is a course for students who are interested in cooking, learning new technical culinary skills, how to follow and create recipes and develop presentation skills. Students also learn how ingredients function to create a variety of food products, develop knowledge about food nutrition, learn the science behind food and how the food industry operates.

This qualification is assessed in two components: Unit 1 – A food investigation (15%), A food science investigation, how ingredients work to create a food product of your choice. A controlled food preparation task (35%) – to plan, research and prepare a menu and Unit 2 – A written examination (50%).

Areas of study: Practical skills and techniques, nutrients, the diet and health, dietary requirements, cooking methods, food choices, food provenance and food safety.

**Assessment Method:** 50% exam, 50% NEA – non examination assessments

**Exam Board:** Eduqas

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**Vocational Options**

**Creative iMedia**

Cambridge Nationals in Creative iMedia is media sector-focused, including film, television, web development, gaming and animation, and has a strong IT focus.

The course will give students knowledge of key areas in this field from pre-production skills to digital animation. The course has a motivational, hands-on approach to learning.

The subject delivers skills across a wide range of learning styles and abilities, effectively engaging and inspiring all students to achieve great things. Students may study the following topics: Web development, Digital Graphics, Pre-Production skills, Sound production and Digital Animation.

**Assessment Method:** 75% portfolio, 25% exam

**Exam Board:** OCR (Cambridge Nationals)

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**Sport Studies**

This course is designed to equip students with applied knowledge and practical skills which are desirable to employers in industry sectors. They focus on the acquisition of technical skills.

Sport, Health and Fitness is designed for learners with an interest in any of the health and fitness contexts such as exercise, lifestyles and diet.

The course has clear progression routes to Post-16 qualifications, training and employment routes as well as teaching important life skills and knowledge.

**Assessment Method:** Students are assessed on a Pass, Merit or Distinction basis (six units over the two years).

**Exam Board:** OCR
Vocational Options

**Engineering Studies**

The NCFE Level 2 certificate in Engineering Studies is a vocational qualification (V Cert) which is equivalent to one GCSE. It is designed for learners with an interest in engineering, and provides them with experience of using different tools and materials, and enables them to use these within further education or apprenticeships. It will give them a basic understanding of what engineering may involve.

Students will study the theoretical aspects of engineering and practical elements, such as engineering drawing and creating products using engineering materials. In particular students will study the following topics: Introduction to engineering, Introduction to engineering drawing, Tools and equipment for engineering and engineering materials and their properties.

**Assessment Method:** 75% portfolio, 25% exam
**Exam Board:** NCFE

**Child Development**

The OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Child Development is for students who are interested in a career working with and caring for young children. There are 3 units underpinning the course. The first unit covers the essential knowledge underpinning child development for example, reproduction, parental responsibility, childhood illnesses and child safety. In Unit 2, students will gain knowledge of the equipment needs of babies and recommended nutrition and hygiene practices. In the final unit students will learn how to observe developmental norms in children up to the age of five and the importance of play in development.

**Assessment Method:**
1 exam (50%) and 2 internally assessed courseworks
**Exam Board:** OCR Cambridge National

The Options Process 2017–2018

**Students must:**

- Take part in all Academic Tracking activities on SEARCH Days
- Speak with your subject teachers
- Attend the Options Evening Event on 27th February with Parent/Carer
- Collect Options Form at the Options Evening Event
- Read the Options Booklet with Parent/Carer when you get home
- Attend Year 8 Parents Evening on Thursday 15th March
- Hand-in Options form by Friday 16th March
- Attend Year 8 Parents Evening on Thursday 15th March
- Hand-in Options form by Friday 16th March