

GCSE COURSE PROSPECTUS



Southend High School for Boys

Year 8 – January 2020

Name Form

FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Your son has now arrived at the stage of his school career when we must contemplate the courses which he will follow, leading to assessment at GCSE level. We have to set our sights on securing the top grades for every pupil in every subject at GCSE, and this will not happen unless students are routinely exposed to material and ideas beyond that level during Years 10 and 11. Therefore pupils in Year 8 are being asked to make some subject option choices now, ready to commence their GCSE studies a year early at the start of Year 9.

The Government has determined the expectations for GCSE study including the extent of any flexibility and opportunity within the curriculum for 14-16 year olds; we have tried to reflect some of these features in the school's options process. However, we continue to encourage the learning of modern foreign languages and we place some other restrictions on choices. Our aim at school is to ensure an appropriate and balanced curriculum for each individual so that educational and careers needs are sensibly catered for during the Key Stage.

The Government has stated that the following subjects remain compulsory:

- English (which leads to GCSE entries in English and English Literature)
- Mathematics
- Science
- Religious Education

The school has decided that, in addition, pupils should study the following:

- Modern Foreign Languages

The remainder of their GCSE subjects can be chosen from those listed in this booklet. This list of 'optional subjects' has been drawn up after much careful consideration. A further round of choices will follow during Year 9 but it is important to realise now that your son cannot start a course in Year 10 that he has not studied in Year 9.

We strongly recommend that pupils choose at least one of Geography or History. On the other hand, we strongly advise that pupils should choose at least one of Art, Drama, Music and PE. (If your son wishes to make a case for doing more than two of these subjects, he should make that clear to Mr Groves, Leader of Year 8.)

In the case of all optional subjects, whether a particular course is able to run is dependent on the numbers wanting to do it. Courses that do not attract sufficient numbers to be economical may have to be cancelled. Selection of pupils most likely to benefit may have to take place if a course is oversubscribed and relevant selection criteria will be utilised in this eventuality.

In addition to the external examination courses, all pupils will follow a programme of Personal Social & Health Education (PSHE) (which includes sex education, careers education and Citizenship), and Physical Education (PE). Aspects of contemporary values and moral issues also occur within the RE course.

Pupils are being given an introduction to the whole subject of GCSE courses and choice. They will receive more detailed explanation about complex areas such as Science, and are being given considerable support by tutors and careers staff. Boys are encouraged to discuss preliminary choices with parents and indeed, to talk over matters with as many relevant parties as possible. The recent IAR will have provided insight into current subject performance and given some clues as to the viability of pursuing a subject to GCSE in your son's case.

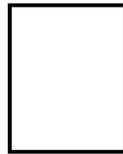
The Options meeting on Thursday 30th January is intended to offer further information and advice to parents on some of the above issues. On the evening, Mr Groves will also be introducing the concept of the Forti Award. Your attendance at this evening would be appreciated and will be extremely beneficial to your son. In addition you will have an opportunity to discuss options with specific teachers at the Parent's evening on 10th February. The deadline for returning the completed Options form is 14th February.

The rest of this booklet comprises three sections: a general introduction; the core examination subjects; the optional examination subjects.

If you have any specific queries or will be unable to attend the Options meeting, please contact Mr Groves (Leader of Year 8) or Mr Brandon (Director of KS3) who are co-ordinating the programme.

Robin M Bevan
Headteacher

SECTION A



GENERAL INTRODUCTION

GCSE

GCSE, the General Certificate of Secondary Education, was introduced in 1986 to meet the needs of pupils in the final stage of compulsory education, whether they plan to proceed to further study, training or employment. It has now been integrated within the revised National Curriculum: GCSE is considered the main 'pathway' for pupils in Key Stage 4 whose interests and talents lie primarily in academic study. New examination courses in English and Maths, for first completion in 2017, have now seen the publication of the first set of national results; and revised specifications are being introduced in all other subjects.

For all subjects, the syllabus seeks to promote a balance of knowledge, understanding and skills and each will be assessed by a combination of coursework, controlled (ie classroom) assessments, and terminal examination. All courses followed are **full** GCSE courses.

Coursework will continue to play a limited role in GCSE assessment. Completing coursework assignments and preparing for controlled assessments requires high levels of planning, personal organisation and self-discipline. The weighting given to coursework varies from subject to subject and this information is included in the individual subject sections to be found later in this booklet.

At the start of Year 10 each pupil will receive a calendar of coursework deadlines (with a duplicate provided for parental reference). The school strongly advises both students and parents to make a careful note of these dates and to monitor progress in every subject, for, if a pupil falls behind on an assignment, it is very difficult for him to catch up and at the same time maintain his day to day commitments in other subjects.

CAREERS CONSIDERATIONS

We would not expect your son to be too concerned with particular careers at an age where he is young, inexperienced and still developing intellectually. Indeed, it is quite possible that his interests, inclinations and specific ability will change or develop and it could be quite wrong to be set on a particular path at this age. It is therefore preferable to follow a pragmatic rather than a dogmatic approach when considering subjects for GCSE.

Our curriculum is constructed with this approach in mind. The core element ensures continuation in subjects that provide vital foundations for the rest of the curriculum in literacy and numeracy and furnish a solid basis of qualification for employment and University matriculation (up to, and including, Oxford and Cambridge entrance).

This “core” is enhanced by further, optional subjects, the selection of which should be given careful consideration as the final choice can have implications affecting future career prospects.

As it is unlikely that the majority of pupils will have a distinct idea about their career, it is important that the selection of subjects allows the greatest flexibility with regard to any change of direction that might occur.

In the past it has been the science subjects which have caused most problems in matching up with course requirements at university. The introduction of Combined Science has largely removed this difficulty. For those contemplating medical careers the three separate sciences may be advantageous but it is not an obligatory stipulation for entry to A Level sciences - these can be done with Combined Science GCSE.

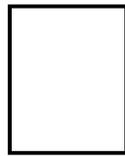
It is worth noting that those pupils who have formed their ideas concerning their future often pick occupations requiring the highest standards of GCSE and Advanced Level qualifications e.g. doctor, airline pilot, the law. These are also extremely competitive career areas.

The humanities, languages and the more practical subjects should not be undervalued. Such subjects broaden a pupil’s outlook, encourage rational and analytical skills and develop powers of expression - all qualities likely to appeal to future employers.

It is important that your son selects those subjects that he enjoys studying. This may be the final influencing factor as this will, hopefully, ensure the motivation needed to achieve the highest success in the GCSE examinations.

Careers staff are available for consultation in the Careers Office or by appointment.

SECTION B



CORE EXAMINATION SUBJECTS

ENGLISH

Students undertake some GCSE bridging units in the autumn term of Year 9. The actual GCSE course commences in the spring term.

The English language GCSE will require students to:

- read a range of texts, both non-fiction and fiction, and develop their ability to think critically about texts
- use knowledge gained from wider reading to develop their own writing
- learn to write effectively, coherently and accurately, using Standard English appropriately
- listen to and understand spoken language, and use spoken Standard English effectively.

Spoken language will be reported on as part of the English language qualification, but it will not form part of the final mark and grade.

The English literature GCSE will require study of:

- at least one play by Shakespeare
- at least one 19th century novel
- a selection of poetry since 1780, including Romantic poetry
- fiction or drama from the British Isles from 1914 onwards
- unseen texts

My notes about English:

MATHEMATICS

AIMS AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The course should encourage pupils to develop:

- an interest in and understanding of mathematics;
- mathematical knowledge and oral, written and practical skills;
- problem-solving skills via investigative approaches;
- a willingness and ability to work independently and co-operatively;
- an appreciation of the interdependence of different branches of mathematics;
- the ability to apply mathematics to everyday situations;
- an ability to use mathematics across the curriculum;
- a firm foundation for further study of the subject.

Pupils will be entered for the GCSE examination at the Higher Tier.

Qualification aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the GCSE (9 - 1) in Mathematics are to enable students to:

- develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
- acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences, and draw conclusions
- comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

SYLLABUS CONTENT

This is prescribed by Ofqual and covers

1. Number
2. Algebra
3. Ratio, proportion and rates of change
4. Geometry and measures
5. Probability
6. Statistics.

There is emphasis on short exercise-type tasks, algebraic manipulation and longer, unstructured questions including problem solving.

There are three key assessment objectives.

AO1 is about using and applying standard techniques (40% of assessment).

AO2 is about reasoning, interpreting and communicating mathematically (30% of assessment).

AO3 is about solving problems with a much greater focus on solving non-routine problems in mathematical and nonmathematical contexts (30% of assessment).

CAREERS AND FURTHER POTENTIAL

Approximately 60 pupils will also study GCSE Further Maths. From all groups, many proceed to study A Level Mathematics in the Sixth Form, where the subject has strong links with the Sciences, Economics and many other areas of study. The skills involved in the subject are of course vital to all, regardless of future specialisation or careers.

My notes about Mathematics:

SCIENCE

Science is a compulsory 'core' subject; all pupils must take a course which contains the elements of all three sciences.

OPTIONS

Pupils have two options:

GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy. This is a double award equivalent to 2 GCSEs

or

GCSE Separate Sciences leading to 3 GCSEs

- AQA Biology
- AQA Chemistry
- AQA Physics.

ASSESSMENT SCHEME FOR COMBINED SCIENCE

There will be six exams, two biology, two chemistry and two physics papers. Each exam is 1 hour 15 minutes.

There is no longer a controlled assessment of practical / investigative skills. There are 16 "required practicals" which will be done in normal lessons. There will be questions about these practicals in the written papers.

ASSESSMENT SCHEME FOR SEPARATE SCIENCES

There will be six exams, two biology, two chemistry and two physics papers. Each exam is 1 hour 45 minutes.

There is no longer a controlled assessment of practical / investigative skills. There are 8 "required practicals" for each subject which will be done in normal lessons. There will be questions about these practicals in the written papers.

LINKS TO AS AND A2 LEVEL

Either option will provide the background necessary to study biology, chemistry and physics to AS level and beyond.

My notes about Science:

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

YOU MUST TAKE AT LEAST ONE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

YOU MAY TAKE TWO OR THREE LANGUAGES.

AIMS AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

In modern foreign languages the *aims* are as follows:

- to provide a framework for the development of different skills, knowledge and understanding in a modern foreign language
- to develop understanding of the spoken and written forms of the language in a range of contexts;
- to develop the ability to communicate effectively in the language through both the spoken and written word, using a range of vocabulary and structures;
- to develop knowledge and understanding of the grammar of the language and the ability to apply it;
- to apply their knowledge and understanding in a variety of relevant contexts which reflect their previous learning and maturity;
- to develop knowledge and understanding of countries and communities where the language is spoken;
- to develop positive attitudes to language learning;
- to provide a suitable foundation for further study and/or practical use of the language.

The assessment objectives are as follows:

- listening and understanding spoken language (25%);
- communicating in speech, showing knowledge of and applying accurately the grammar and structures prescribed in the specification (25%);
- understanding and responding to written language (25%);
- communicating in writing, showing knowledge of and applying accurately the grammar and structures prescribed in the specification (25%).

SYLLABUS CONTENT

Examination Board

French **(AQA GCSE course)**
German **(AQA GCSE course)**
Spanish **(AQA GCSE course)**

Students follow the following themes on which all assessments are based:

1. Identity and Culture
2. Local, national, international and global areas of interest
3. Current and future study and employment

ASSESSMENT SCHEME

The exams will be weighted equally at 25% for speaking, listening, reading and writing.

CAREERS AND FURTHER POTENTIAL

Successful acquisition of a language requires an ordered, logical and precise mind capable of consistent application together with the ability to adapt, develop and communicate. It is precisely because it reflects these qualities that it is a desirable qualification to an employer.

A high grade in GCSE will also denote a useful language tool which will be welcomed by employers in the City and elsewhere. In addition it should also act as a good foundation for further study (A Level or beyond); able linguists may look to higher education with a view to following either a pure language course in one or more languages or one of the increasingly popular combination courses (a language in conjunction with another subject, e.g. Business Studies, Economics, Law, Geography, European Studies, most sciences etc). Top universities consider a language to be a facilitating subject. In other words, if you do well when studying a language, it will make it easier for you to enter a top university.

Languages are indeed very desirable qualifications, especially post-Brexit where there will be an even higher demand for language skills. This is particularly evident in marketing and the service industries, whilst language skills are advantageous, if not essential, in many areas of travel, tourism, and communications; teaching and translation are other possible careers.

My notes about French:

My notes about German:

My notes about Spanish:

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

AIMS AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The new OCR GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies specifications are designed to help learners develop knowledge and understanding of religions and non-religious beliefs, such as atheism, humanism and secularism. A new addition to this GCSE is **Dialogue between religions and non-religious beliefs and attitudes**. This topic area tackles relevant issues for learners in modern British society.

Learners will:

- develop knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings and sources of wisdom and authority, including through their reading of key religious texts, other texts, and scriptures of the religions they are studying
- develop the ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of the subject
- engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth, and their influence on human life
- reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes in the light of what they have learnt and contribute to their preparation for adult life in a pluralistic society and global community
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of two religions
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key sources of wisdom and authority including scripture and/or sacred texts, where appropriate, which support contemporary religious faith
- understand the influence of religion on individuals, communities and societies
- understand significant common and divergent views within religions and beliefs
- apply knowledge and understanding in order to analyse questions related to religious beliefs and values
- Construct well-informed and balanced arguments on matters concerned with religious beliefs and values.

N.B. We promote the view that all students, regardless of race, religious conviction or unbelief should have the right of equal access to the Department. This subject enables candidates to develop their understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues in considerable depth. We promote tolerance and respect for the beliefs, cultures and lifestyles of all students.

SYLLABUS

Examination Board: OCR Religious Studies: J625 Full Course. First assessment in 2018.

ASSESSMENT SCHEME

All Religious Studies assessment is examination based.

Students will be assessed on two components.

- 1) Beliefs and teachings & practices- learners study two religions; Christianity and Islam. This is assessed by two 1 hour papers, worth 63 marks each making up 50% of their GCSE Religious studies grade.
- 2) Religion, Philosophy and Ethics in the modern world from a religious perspective. Learners will study Christian views on the following themes:
 - Relationships and families
 - The existence of God, gods and the ultimate reality
 - Religion, peace and conflict
 - Dialogue between religious and non-religious beliefs and attitudes

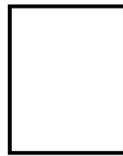
This is assessed by a 2 hour written exam worth 126 marks, making up the other 50% of their GCSE Religious studies grade.

CAREERS AND FURTHER POTENTIAL

The course is designed to enhance the spiritual and social development of pupils. It shares key skills with English and History. It will be of particular relevance to those who seek to work in the many vocational paths e.g. police, health, social work, educational professions; it is also highly valued in personnel-management, law, journalism and medicine. It will provide a strong basis for those who wish to take Religious Studies, Philosophy, Theology, Psychology, Law, History and English to a higher level.

My notes about Religious Studies:

SECTION C



OPTIONAL EXAMINATION SUBJECTS

ART & DESIGN (Fine Art)

AIMS AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The course should enable pupils to:

- Experiment with a range of materials and processes, including drawing, painting, mixed media, 3D, computer manipulation and photography.
- Record observations, experiences and ideas in forms that are appropriate to intentions;
- Analyse and evaluate images, objects and artefacts showing appreciation;
- Develop and explore ideas showing an ability to review, refine and modify work as it progresses;
- Present personal responses that realises their intentions and makes informed connections with the work of others.

SYLLABUS CONTENT

Examination Board: AQA

The project(s) undertaken in Year 9 will give students the opportunity to develop their foundation skills and to explore materials and processes in more experimental ways, than they may have experienced in Year 7 and 8. They will also be encouraged to develop more independence outside of lessons, by using the Art rooms at lunchtime and after school, to further their knowledge and practical skills.

Students will be introduced to the work of a range of contemporary, experimental artists and will be asked to make a series of personal responses, inspired by these artists.

All of the work produced in Year 9 can be used in students' coursework portfolios, which must be submitted for final assessment at the end of Year 11.

ASSESSMENT SCHEME (End of Year 11)

- Unit 1 – (Coursework – 60%) A folder or sketchbook of coursework and several larger outcomes.
- Unit 2 – (ESA / Exam Unit – 40%) A smaller project, set by the exam board, including a sketchbook and a few larger outcomes.

Both units are marked using the following Assessment Objective. All objectives are equally weighted.

- Assessment Objective 1: Development of an idea. Students must show a clear journey through their project, from conception to realisation. Along the way, they must research and analyse the work of other artists and use this inspiration to develop their own visual language.
- Assessment Objective 2: Experimenting with materials and refining work as it develops. Students must demonstrate willingness and ability to use and develop skills with a range of different materials and processes. They must also make independent and conscious choices about which materials to use for some tasks, demonstrating the ability to recognise which tools are most appropriate for different jobs.
- Assessment Objective 3: Observing and Recording ideas, appropriate to intentions. Students must record their ideas in a range of ways, using drawing, photography, annotation and models.
- Assessment Objective 4: Making personal responses. Rather than producing one "final piece", students must use the inspiration of other artists studied, along with their own observations and present approximately 4 larger pieces outside of the sketchbook, which reflect both their discoveries from the project, as well as showcasing their own visual language and ideas.

This assessment scheme will be used throughout the course, starting in Year 10. For this reason, within the first 2 report cycles, students' grades may appear lower than in the previous year, whilst they gather evidence of their ability across all 4 assessment objectives.

CAREERS AND FURTHER POTENTIAL

The premier subject for architectural and design based careers. Even dentistry interviews for university will ask for evidence of art. Some students will want to study Art because it provides them with a portfolio of work which can gain them entry to a foundation course and a range of careers in the arts, such as architecture, advertising, TV, theatre, fashion, illustration, graphic design and many other areas including film and computer assisted video.

Every man-made object has been designed by somebody. A start has to be made somewhere and it generally begins with a portfolio that shows an ability to draw and some inspiration to go with it.

There is a need for students to develop their knowledge about the background to Art, Design and Culture. With this in mind, students will be encouraged to visit museums and galleries on a regular basis, to gain insight and inspiration from the work of other artists.

My notes about Art and Design:

BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

AIMS

- To provide students with an introduction to GCSE Business Studies and Economics.
- To enable students to make an informed decision as to whether they would like to study Business Studies or Economics at GCSE.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

- Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of concepts, issues and terminology.
- Apply skills, knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts.
- Analyse and evaluate evidence, make reasoned judgements and present appropriate conclusions.

SYLLABUS CONTENT

- In Business, students will develop an understanding of business concepts, business terminology, the integrated nature of business activity and the impact of business on individuals and wider society. Pupils will apply knowledge and understanding to contemporary business issues and to different types and sizes of businesses in local, national and global contexts. They will have opportunities to follow a range of activities e.g. mini-enterprises, financial accounting exercises and investigate the purpose of social enterprises.
- In Economics, students will be exposed to the fundamental concepts of both microeconomics and macroeconomics. In microeconomics, students will investigate the economic problem, specialisation and exchange, demand and supply, and elasticity. In macroeconomics, students will be introduced to economics objectives and government policy. As part of this unit of work, the main areas for focus include economic growth, inflation, unemployment and how the UK economy operates within the global economic system.

ASSESSMENT SCHEME

This will take the usual form of class tests, peer assessment and an end of year exam.

CAREERS AND FURTHER POTENTIAL

Anyone interested in a future career in business and finance will find the course both stimulating and useful, however it is only an introduction. Pupils can take either Economics or Business in the Sixth Form without having studied either at GCSE. A good all-round level of attainment is expected, i.e. good written communication and numeracy skills plus a real interest in the world of business and economics.

My notes about Business and Economics:

CITIZENSHIP STUDIES

AIMS AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

Citizenship GCSE enables students to gain an informed understanding of the contemporary issues that dominate society today. Students learn a wide range of knowledge of political institutions, the media and legal systems and apply this to current debates.

SYLLABUS CONTENT

The course content is divided into five themes:

Theme A : Living together in the UK (How have communities developed in the UK? What is identity? What are democratic values and where do they come from? How does local democracy work?)

Theme B : Democracy at work in the UK (Who runs the country? How does Parliament work? How is power shared between Westminster and the devolved administrations? How does government manage public money?)

Theme C : Law and justice (What is the law for and how does it affect us? How does the justice system work? Is crime increasing in society?)

Theme D : Power and influence (What power and influence can citizens have? What role and influence should the media have? Does the UK have power and influence in the wider world?)

Theme E : Taking citizenship action (Students must carry out an in-depth, critical investigation leading to citizenship action. The investigation and action can be based on any aspect or issue arising from the course content and should be designed to have an impact locally, nationally or globally.)

ASSESSMENT SCHEME

Paper 1

Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of the qualification 80 marks

Section A

Questions are focused on specification *Theme A: Living together in the UK*.

Section B

Questions are focused on specification *Theme B: Democracy at work in the UK*.

Section C

Questions are focused on specification *Theme C: Law and justice*.

Section D

Extended-response questions related to two or more of specification Themes A–C.

Paper 2

Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of the qualification 80 marks

Section A

Questions relate to the students' own citizenship action, as specified in specification *Theme E: Taking citizenship action*.

Section B

Questions require students to comment on others' actions and relate to specification *Theme D: Power and influence*.

Section C

Questions are focused on specification *Theme D: Power and influence*. One question will also link to content in one of Themes A–C.

CAREERS AND FURTHER POTENTIAL

The specification provides a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for candidates, whether they wish to pursue the study of related social science subjects, such as Economics, Business Studies, Law and Government and Politics and/or as a preparation for responsible, participative citizenship in the community. It has the potential to be of value in many career areas, especially those related to legal affairs, the voluntary sector and the business sector.

My notes about Citizenship Studies:

COMPUTER SCIENCE

AIMS AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

Computer science gives learners a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works as well as providing excellent preparation for higher study and employment in the field of Computer Science. It develops critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills through the study of computer programming.

Computer technology continues to advance rapidly and the way that technology is consumed has been changing at a fast pace over recent years. The growth in the use of mobile devices and web-related technologies has exploded, resulting in new challenges for employers and employees. For example, businesses today require an ever-increasing number of technologically aware individuals. This is even more so in the gaming, mobile and web related industries and this specification has been designed with this in mind.

THE SPECIFICATION OVERVIEW

OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Computer Science (J277)

Content Overview	Assessment Overview	
Computer systems <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Systems Architecture• Memory• Storage• Wired and wireless networks• Network topologies, protocols and layers• System security• System software• Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns	Computer systems (01) 80 marks 1 hour and 30 minutes Written paper (no calculators allowed)	50% of total GCSE
Computational thinking, algorithms and programming <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Algorithms*• Programming techniques• Producing robust programs• Computational logic• Translators and facilities of languages• Data representation	Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (02) 80 marks 1 hour and 30 minutes Written paper (no calculators allowed)	50% of total GCSE

* Algorithm questions are not exclusive to Component 02 and can be assessed in all components

CAREER AND FUTURE POTENTIAL

Computing is of enormous importance to the economy, and the role of Computer Science as a discipline itself and as an 'underpinning' subject across Science and Engineering is growing rapidly. Computer science continue to have a growing importance. This means there are bigger demands for professionals who are qualified in this area. If learners want to go on to higher study and employment in the field of Computer Science, they will find that this course provides a superb stepping stone.

My notes about Computer Science:

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

AIMS AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

Design & Technology provides opportunities for pupils to combine their designing and making skills with knowledge and understanding in order to design and make quality products.

Specifically, pupils should develop the ability to:

- apply knowledge and understanding, in combination with design and communication skills, to design products to suitable specifications (Designing);
- apply knowledge and understanding of relevant processes, materials and techniques and use materials, tools and other equipment to produce work to suitable specifications (Making).

SYLLABUS CONTENT

In Year 9 we offer a broad Design and Technology curriculum, which allows students to explore the core content of the subject and builds on the work covered in the previous years. This will eventually be 25% of the final GCSE exam.

Once this experience has been gained, there are two pathways at the end of Year 9, which will lead into the specialist focus of the chosen GCSE:

Electronics (Systems) - This allows students to explore more in-depth and gain more valuable experience in electronics. You will learn a range of sensors, control devices and output devices that can be used to create more complex systems. You will also learn where some of the materials used to make electronics originate. The content will be 25% of their final GCSE exam and can be applied to their final coursework material.

Product Design: Plastics (Polymers) - This allows students to explore more in-depth and gain more valuable experience in manufacturing using polymer based materials. You will learn a range of contexts where polymers are essential to the success of a product. The content will be 25% of their final GCSE exam and can be applied to their final coursework material.

Both courses develop skills of creativity and critical analysis through making links between the principles of good design, existing solutions and technological knowledge. You will prove these skills by producing a series of practical projects as well as through formal examinations. Combining knowledge and understanding with practical skills, these activities are intended to provide breadth in creative learning and depth in the application of practical and transferable skills, which will help pupils progress with suitable skills into A-level subjects.

Students are required to produce coursework equivalent to 50 hours of activity that makes effective use of CAD/CAM, and offers the opportunity for pupils to develop their key skills in communication, application of numbers and IT.

The course includes the examination of existing products, the ways in which they have been produced and their effects on society. The course will lead to a full certificate at GCSE.

ASSESSMENT SCHEME

In each of the above Design & Technology syllabuses, the components are weighted:

Coursework	50%
External Examination	25% Core
	25% Electronics / Plastics (Polymers)

CAREERS AND FURTHER POTENTIAL

The nature of Design & Technology helps to develop skills in investigation, decision-making and problem-solving, and as such, has the potential to be of value in almost all career areas.

My notes about Design and Technology:

DRAMA

Edexcel GCSE Drama- first teaching from September 2016.

AIMS AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

Candidates are encouraged to:

- Engage in the process of dramatic study to develop as effective and independent learners.
- Work imaginatively and creatively in collaborative contexts.
- Reflect on and evaluate their own work and that of others;
- Develop and demonstrate competence in a range of practical, creative and performance skills.
- Consider and explore the impact of social, historical and cultural influences on drama texts and activities.

The examination will assess candidate's ability to:

- Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance.
- Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions.
- Analyse and evaluate individual practical work and the work of others.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed.
- Work collaboratively with others to create explore theatrical intentions.

SYLLABUS CONTENT & EXAMINATION

- **Component 1: Devising Performance - Coursework [40 %]**
 - Practical Exploration and performance and Written Portfolio.
- **Component 2: Performance from a Text- Coursework [20%]**
 - Performance of two texts. This is assessed by a visiting Examiner.
- **Component 3: Written examination- 1 hour and 30 minutes [40 %]**
 - Bringing texts to life and Live Theatre Evaluation.

CAREERS AND FURTHER POTENTIAL

GCSE Drama will nurture a student's creative and cultural development. The course teaches valuable skills of self-confidence, communication, self-awareness, imagination, independent thinking, teamwork, public presentation, and aesthetic sensitivity – all of which are useful in higher education or in almost any career.

GCSE Drama is a valuable subject in its own right, and it paves the way for entry onto the A Level Drama & Theatre Studies course.

My notes about Drama:

GEOGRAPHY

AIMS AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The aims of Year 9 Geography and the GCSE course are:

- to provide an awareness and understanding of physical, economic, social, political and cultural processes and environments, and of people's interaction with them;
- to develop geographical, practical and learning skills;
- to encourage an awareness and appreciation of how values and attitudes are important in making judgements on geographical issues.
- to take a keen interest in places.
- to care about the issues affecting us and the planet we live on.

SPECIFICATION CONTENT

GCSE Geography is challenging and interesting. It has a lot of content and covers an array of skills. You will need to be confident in both Maths and English as geographers study data, analyse graphs, use statistics, write reports and have a good overall knowledge of the world. We follow the AQA course which has 3 exam papers. Paper 1 tests your knowledge on Living with the Environment, Paper 2 examines Challenges in the Human Environment and Paper 3 tests your Geographical Application, this means knowledge from two different local field trips and questions on pre-release material which can cover *any* aspect of the course, it will have an issues based theme such as whether fracking should be allowed or a new housing developments built on protected land.

Below are the topics:

In **Year 9**, pupils study the **Living World** where we look at ecosystems, focus on the **Tropical Rainforests** and study **Cold Environments**. We then look at **Resource Management** focusing on food, water and energy. The final topic looks at **Coasts** and how we manage them.

In **Year 10** pupils will study the **Challenge of Natural Hazards** – this is split into tectonics, weather and climate. **Changing Economic World** is the next topic with a focus on global economies and contrasts in wealth, how countries are developing at different rates and how the UK economy is changing.

In **Year 11** pupils study **Urban issues and Challenges** with a focus on urban studies in contrasting places across the world and within the UK, this is followed by **Rivers and UK landscapes** which will test how much you know about this nation.

The pre-release study is available 12 weeks before the exam. It will be a booklet containing maps, images, data and texts concerning a real world issue.

In addition, there will be a fieldwork component. This will take the form of two local fieldwork investigations where primary data will be collected then written up, including data presentation, analysis and concluding comments. Fieldwork is crucial to geography and this feeds through to A level and degree level too.

ASSESSMENT SCHEME

There are three exam papers covering a balanced mix of human and physical geography, fieldwork and geographical applications. The first two exams are 1 ½ hours the third 1 ¼

All papers contain structured data-response questions and more open ended tasks and some multiple-choice questions too.

CAREERS AND FURTHER POTENTIAL

GCSE Geography is an obvious advantage for those wishing to continue the subject to A Level; the GCSE course will be of interest to all those who wish to study the environment and contemporary issues. There are some basic statistics, graphics and ICT, whilst the fieldwork allows individuals to work collaboratively at their own pace in the local environment.

The value of geography lies in its ability to link sciences and humanities; it is ideal for a large range of careers, including business, commerce, planning, journalism and any involving the environment. Its curriculum links to biology, government and politics and economics make it a very important and useful subject.

The value of geography to employers lies in the skills geographers possess - numeracy, graph interpretation, ICT, data analysis, literacy, team working - and the knowledge base students have. In a world where business is increasingly carried out on a global scale, geographers have the advantage in understanding the causes of globalisation and knowing about how problems can be managed. By studying contemporary processes and events at a range of scales, students develop an excellent understanding of the modern world and the challenges that will face us all in the future. The understanding of global issues has never been more important. Climate change, hazard management, sustainable living, endangered species, conflict, globalisation, sea level rises...the list goes on.....geography teaches about all these!

My notes about Geography:

HISTORY

AIMS AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The aim of all History teaching is the development of interest in the past, and an appreciation of what is involved in understanding and interpreting it. The GCSE course at SHSB encourages these aims in a challenging and positive manner, and also aims to explore closely how the modern day world in which students live has changed, especially through the process of war. Since History is not solely factual knowledge, students are required to show awareness of the nature and use of historical evidence. They must develop skills such as the ability to locate and analyse information, construct logical arguments, and communicate clearly in written tasks, which may require concise or extended answers.

SYLLABUS CONTENT

The syllabus is from Edexcel. Papers 1 and 3 include a lot of source work.

Paper 1 (30%) – Thematic Study - *Britain and Warfare*, c.1250-1991 (with a case study on London, 1939-45)

Paper 2 (40%) – Period and Depth Studies – *Henry VIII & His Ministers*, 1509-1547, AND *The Cold War*, 1945-1991

Paper 3 (30%) – Modern Depth Study – *Weimar and Nazi Germany*, 1918 - 1939

CAREERS AND FURTHER POTENTIAL

History is a suitable background for a lot of jobs, though perhaps the most relevant are law, policing, journalism, teaching and business. These all consider History to be a subject offering valuable training in areas that can be applied to them, such as problem solving, report writing, arguing a case, dealing with evidence, considering different points of view, making a judgement and synthesising complex information. The History department has further information and leaflets on this. History also combines well with most subjects at GCSE, or can be done on its own, out of a simple liking for the subject. A lower school grade 2+ by the end of Year 8 is a sensible minimum in order to do GCSE History. A grade '6' is the **mandatory** minimum for taking History on to AS level.

My notes about History:

MUSIC

AIMS AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The aims of the course are:

- to promote skills in performing, composing and analysing music;
- to develop an appreciation of all kinds of music;
- to support social and personal development through performing music with others in e.g. rock groups, bands, orchestras or local singing groups;
- to encourage the use of music technology.

These aims are pursued through a number of assessment objectives.

SYLLABUS CONTENT

Examination Board: EDEXCEL 1MU01

The three primary activities are:

- Listening;
- Performing;
- Composing.

ASSESSMENT SCHEME

There is one written exam (40%) in the summer where you will listen to a CD and answer questions based on the 8 set works we have studied throughout the course. The music is drawn from a range of diverse styles.

The remaining 60% is coursework divided up as follows:

Performing (30%)

Students have numerous opportunities to perform throughout the course, of which two are ultimately chosen for exam assessment. Of these, one must be a solo and the other an ensemble performance.

Composing (30%)

Composing two pieces in a style which you have chosen, based on one of the 4 units we have studied throughout the course.

If you are interested in music technology, you may use computer sequences, digital recording and sampling in the preparation of compositions.

CAREERS AND FURTHER POTENTIAL

GCSE Music is a good preparation for further musical study and a solid foundation for the AS/A Levels in Music and Music Technology. Alternatively you may wish to go into a job where it is useful to have had experience of music or where you will need to use some of the skills developed during the course. These might include careers in the music industry, publishing, entertainment and teaching or any job which involves communication and expressive skills. Music can serve as proof of creative thinking.

If you choose GCSE Music, the school provides a free 15-minute instrumental lesson. It is also an expectation, in the light of this, that every GCSE Music student becomes involved with the extra-curricular music programme in some way.

Should you require further details please see Mr Worth. He will be happy to answer any queries you may have.

My notes about Music:

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

AIMS AND ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The year aims to show:

- How to prepare for particular activities and recover afterwards;
- The short and long term effects of exercise on the body;
- The role of exercise in establishing and maintaining health;
- To show understanding of the principles involved.

Candidates will be assessed through both practical assessment and via theory study on the following objectives:

- physical performance, including the ability to interrelate planning, performing and evaluating whilst undertaking activity;
- analysis and improvement of performance, including officiating;
- knowledge and understanding of factors affecting performance; the health and safety aspects; reasons for participating in physical activity.

COURSE CONTENT

Pupils will follow the National Curriculum Areas of Games, Racquet, Striking, Fitness and Athletic Activities.

Pupils will also be required to demonstrate their ability to analyse performance in these activities, and to incorporate the relevant skills, tactics and rules in competitive fixtures by officiating matches where applicable. Sporting aptitude will be assessed during PE, Games and extra-curricular sport throughout Year 9

CAREERS AND FURTHER POTENTIAL FROM YEAR 10

Although GCSE PE is not an essential subject for any particular career, it is becoming increasingly regarded as a most useful qualification to possess. The health and fitness aspect is of course vital to all regardless of career or any future specialisation and employers in particular are looking for people who have a practical, as well as theoretical knowledge of fitness and diet in relation to health. GCSE PE also leads to AS Level in the Sixth Form.

NB This is an optional GCSE level area in addition to the normal PE and Games followed by all pupils. Owing to the practical elements of the Year 9 Extension area pupils are expected to take a full part in a range of extra-curricular sporting activities before and after school and on Saturday mornings.

My notes about Physical Education:

