**CORE SUBJECTS**

**ENGLISH**

**English Language, English Literature**

English is brilliant because by the time you finish your courses in Year 11 you end up with two GCSEs: one in English Language and one in English Literature

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

Year 9 is preparation for the **GCSE English Language** and the **GCSE English Literature** courses that you will undertake in years 10 and 11.

**What will I study?**

In English Language you will be able to write creatively, understand how to analyse how texts influence readers and look at various aspects of how spoken language plays a part in all our lives. You will read a wide range of texts, develop a wider vocabulary and strengthen your grammar, punctuation and spelling skills. Your speaking and listening skills will also be developed.

In English Literature you will be able to enjoy the pleasure of reading and studying a variety of texts ranging from novels, poetry, modern drama and Shakespeare which will develop your understanding of how different writers convey a wide range of thoughts and ideas to us.

**How will I be assessed?**

During year 9 you will be assessed through a range of assessment tests covering the different skills (including your spelling, punctuation and grammar) being developed in English Language and English Literature.

In Years 10 and 11 your teacher will carefully prepare you for the demands of the final examination papers, so you will be assessed on a range of papers done in class and in “mock” exam conditions.

Both GCSE courses lead to terminal examinations at the end of the courses (note – there is no longer any Controlled Assessment or Coursework element in the assessment scheme).

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

GCSE English Language and English Literature are an entrance requirement for all courses and careers. The English Language and English Literature courses are designed also to be ideal “taster” courses for those students considering pursuing the subjects at A level.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Miss L Jardine or Mr D Jackson

**MATHS**

* All year 9 students will study Key Stage 4 Maths building on the skills developed in lower years to prepare them for their GCSE. It is to allow extra time for the volume of subject content and the demand of that content for all students.
* During year 9 all students will take internal examinations, which will determine the Tier of entry for the GCSE course. There will be two tiers of entry Foundation and Higher.
* Students will be advised by their teacher which Tier of entry is best suited for them.
* Students will be assessed on problem solving and mathematical reasoning.
* Students at both tiers can access a grade 4 or 5 at GCSE.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

GCSE - Foundation and Higher

AQA Further Mathematics Level 2 (for those who have the potential for a grade 9)

**What will I study?**

**In Year 9**

Depending on their ability a student will follow one of the two paths:

1. Those who are expected to gain between a grade 1 and 8 will study Key Stage 4 Maths over three years, building on the skills developed in lower years to prepare them for their GCSE.
2. Those who are expected to gain a grade 9 will be placed in the Express Set or Top Set and will do a linear Edexcel GCSE course over three years alongside studying AQA level 2 Further Mathematics. This will give the students a flavour of AS/A2 Further Mathematics.

The department will decide which path a student will follow. The decision is based on ability in mathematics which is assessed by the examination at the end of year 8, and the attitudes to learning demonstrated in class and at home.

**How will I be assessed?**

Linear GCSE is assessed via end of course examination (3 papers 1 non-calculator and 2 calculator papers).

There is **no** controlled assessment.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mrs K Williams (Curriculum Leader in Mathematics)

**SCIENCE**

**Personalised Approach**

The Science Department has revised its approach to GCSE Science in line with the specification changes made by all exam boards. We feel that students most benefit from a personalised approach to their science learning experience; the courses we offer are designed to enable us to prepare children via an exciting and demanding science curriculum and prepare them fully for post 16 study.

Initially all students will study KS3 science in year 9. This will be followed by a move to one of the following in year 9 once the KS3 curriculum is completed.

**Either**

**Dual Award Science (2 GCSE’s)**

**Or**

**Triple Science - by invitation only- (3 GCSE’s)**.

Staff will discuss with students their suitability for the course prior to options.

***Students completing triple science will also need to opt for triple science in the option blocks.***

**DUAL SCIENCE**

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

For Dual Science students, this course leads to 2 GCSE’s (A\*-G) grade. It provides a solid grounding to go on study each discipline at ‘A’ level and also Applied Science courses.

**What will I study?**

Students will study a broad range of topics from each of the three disciplines Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Students will gain a good understanding across a broad range of relevant topics.

**In Biology:**

* human biology
* how organisms interact
* genetics and evolution

**In Chemistry:**

* the nature of substances and how they react together
* how our knowledge of chemistry is used in business and industry

**In Physics:**

* the use and transfer of energy
* waves, radiation and space

**How will I be assessed?**

The assessment will consist of terminal examinations and papers will be a combination of each of the three disciplines.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mrs E Riding – Science Deputy Curriculum Leader

**TRIPLE SCIENCE (CHEMISTRY, BIOLOGY & PHYSICS) – by invitation only**

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

This course leads to three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, grades (A\*-G). This will be completed as dual science plus one option.

**What will I study?**

**GCSE Chemistry, Biology and Physics offer students a firm foundation to go on and study each discipline at A-level, as well as providing a good background to specialise in other sciences.**

***GCSE Chemistry*** provides the opportunity to gain a good understanding of:

* the nature of substances and how they react together
* how our knowledge of chemistry is used in business and industry
* how our use of raw materials as fuels and in manufacturing can affect the local and global environment

***GCSE Biology*** provides the opportunity to gain a good understanding of:

* human biology
* organisms
* evolution
* the environment

***GCSE Physics*** provides the opportunity to gain a good understanding of:

* the use and transfer of energy
* waves, radiation and space
* the application of physics

**How will I be assessed?**

The assessment will consist of terminal examinations. Each of the disciplines will be assessed individually.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mrs C Kane – Science Curriculum Leader

**ETHICS, PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION IN SOCIETY**

The Religious Studies is an issue-based course in which you are taught how to think but not what to think.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

Most students will study the Short Course – worth ½ a GCSE. Some students will study the Full Course worth a full GCSE.

**What will I study?**

During this course you will have the opportunity to:

* Make sense of the world around them and your own place in it.
* Recognise that there is a religious response to life’s events in all societies.
* Investigate religious history, writings, practices and beliefs.
* Analyse and evaluate different religious and non-religious responses to ethical questions.
* Apply the insights gained to their own concerns as individuals, as members of society and as part of the world-wide community.

There will be references made to all the major world religions but the students will be examined on the Christian and Islamic traditions. Students will be examined at the end of Year 10.

**How will I be assessed?**

Most students will sit just one paper and achieve a short course GCSE in Religious Studies.

Some students may sit two papers and achieve a full GCSE.

Each paper is an hour and half.

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

Much of the course can be directly linked with other subjects and everyday life, leading to the subject being highly desired in numerous occupations and career choices. These include jobs such as: doctors, journalists, lawyers, teachers, analysts, social workers, the list is endless. Companies and especially universities recognise the unique skills that religious studies develop, and therefore the subject is looked on very favourably.

It should also be noted that RE is fast becoming a key subject for Universities and Society because of the diversity of society in general and how important it is to have knowledge of other people’s beliefs.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mr A Shaw

**OPTION SUBJECTS**

**ART GCSE**

Art is a creative and exciting GCSE course in which you will be taught a broad range of techniques, skills and ideas. You will explore the work of modern and traditional artists and have the opportunity to learn about and then use lots of different materials and media. The course allows us to teach you about new and exciting ways of drawing, painting, printmaking, photography and sculpture all within an art GCSE. We will also use Photoshop and digital media with you alongside drawing and painting to help you produce personal, original and imaginative artwork.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

We follow the AQA GCSE Art and Design (4201) course that is made up of two different units –

* Unit 1 is a coursework portfolio unit and counts for 60% of the final GCSE.
* Unit 2 is a new art project called the Externally Set Task and counts for 40% of the final GCSE.

**What will I study?**

**Unit 1 Coursework Portfolio –**

*Year 9 – Foundation year.* You will explore a wide range of new techniques and processes leading to a personal art project that you have chosen. We expect you to select and use the skills and techniques we have taught you in your own project making connections to your artist research.

*Year 10 – Extended Projects / Development year.* We build upon the skills learnt in year 9 in greater depth and you have the opportunity to produce extended projects. You are expected to experiment with lots of different outcomes and techniques within your project.

*Year 11 Winter Term – Consolidation / Refinement.*From September to December in year 11 you have the opportunity to produce a final project and to refine your coursework producing a wide range of artwork. All of your unit 1 coursework portfolio will be submitted at the end of December.

**Unit 2 Externally Set Task –**

Starting in January AQA set the unit 2 question paper and you will select one question as a starting point producing an art project over a number of weeks. At the end of this period you will have 10 hours of supervised time to make your final outcome(s) based on all the development work you have produced in the previous weeks.

**What skills do I need?**

We would like students to have an interest and enthusiasm for the subject. It is important that students appreciate the need to reflect upon their own creative ideas and enjoy trying out new techniques. We want you to enjoy experimenting with ideas and materials.

**How will I be assessed?**

Both units are marked out of a total of 80 marks. Unit 1 is 60% and Unit 2 40% of the final GCSE.

All of the artwork you do in Unit 1 will be marked as a whole and the one project you do for Unit 2 will be marked as a single project. The 80 marks in each unit can be achieved by addressing the 4 AQA assessment objectives with each assessment objective marked out of a possible 20 marks.

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

The Art GCSE course is a fantastic subject to take as it gives you lots of transferable work skills that will help you in the future working in the creative and other industries. We teach you to think, reflect and to make decisions about your own work and the work of others. All of which are valuable skills to learn for future courses at college and university and employment.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mr L Whitmarsh (Subject Leader Art)

**BUSINESS STUDIES**

Business Studies is a subject that can help you acquire a good understanding of how businesses are organised and operate. Be prepared before you enter the world of work!

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

Towards the end of year 9 you will be guided onto one of the following courses:

**Choice 1: BTEC Business Level 2 First Award (broadly equivalent to 1 GCSE)**

**Choice 2: GCSE Business Studies**

**What will I study?**

You will follow a general introduction to Business Studies in the first two terms of year 9. Some of the topics we will look at are:

* **Recruitment** e.g. how can a business decide on who to employ?
* **Business Ownership** e.g. what advantages would being in a partnership bring?
* **Communication** e.g. how best can employees communicate with each other?

**Choice 1: BTEC Business First Award (equivalent to 1 GCSE A\*- C)**

You will complete 4 units covering topics such as business enterprise, customer service, promoting a brand and finance.

**Choice 2: GCSE Business Studies**

You will cover all aspects of business life e.g. finance, production, marketing, the economic environment and business ownership.

**What skills do I need?**

**Choice 1: BTEC Business First Award**

You’ll need to be good at meeting short deadlines, organising your work and working independently. Research skills are also essential to help you gather information for your assignments.

**Choice 2: GCSE Business Studies**

You’ll need to be able to memorise and apply your knowledge of key terms for the exam units.

You will also need to be confident in maths as you will be expected to perform lots of calculations and construct graphs.

The controlled assessment will require you to gather research and be able to write up in detail your findings.

**How will I be assessed?**

**Choice 1: BTEC Business First Certificate (equivalent to 1 GCSEs A\*-C)**

75% coursework - You will complete 3 units of work.

25% exam – You will take an online test on Business Finance.

**Choice 2: GCSE Business Studies**

75% Exam (2 exams) & 25% Controlled assessment (1 piece of written work; approx 2000 words)

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

You may decide to study a Business Studies course at A Level (such as Applied Business or Economics & Business Studies), or go straight into employment. The skills developed on the courses (giving presentations, gathering research, producing balanced written arguments and financial calculations) will help you in any future job or even to set up your own business. Past students have gone on to study many Business related degrees such as Management, Marketing, Human Resources and Accounting.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Miss K Potts (Subject Leader), Mrs S Hollins-Wright or Mr M Harrison

**CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

GCSE Child Development is an exciting and interesting programme of study where you will be able to develop your knowledge and understanding of a range of topics about the development of a child.

**What will I study?**

The course is based on one exam and two controlled assessment pieces (coursework). The course will cover a range of topics and will be taught in the classroom through a variety of different tasks and activities such as video, possible work with virtual babies, research activities and looking at real life situations and possible talks from existing mothers, health visitors or midwives. The topics you will study include:

* **Parenthood, family planning and preparing for a baby**
* **Pregnancy, labour and birth and the new-born baby**
* **Diet, health and care of the child including food, nutrition and child health**
* **Development of the child including physical, intellectual and social and emotional development**
* **Support for the parent and child**

**What skills do I need?**

**You will be taught all skills necessary for the** **course** but if you are good at problem solving, planning, researching and analysing information this would be an advantage.

**How will I be assessed?**

You can achieve a grade A\* – G in child Development

The course consists of three units:

**UNIT 1: Written Paper Exam(40% of total GCSE)**

**UNIT 2: Research Task (20% of total GCSE)**

**UNIT 3: Child Study (40% of total GCSE)**

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

This course provides ideal progression into A Level Health and Social Care taught at Alsager School and can lead into careers in the caring profession such as nursery nurse or working with children in other settings, midwifery, social worker, play group leaders and many others including teaching. It is also a valuable life skill.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mrs L Howard (Subject Leader) or Mrs D West (Subject Teacher)

**COMPUTING**

Have you ever played a game and wanted to know how it worked? Have you ever wondered what’s inside a PC and what it does? Have you got a great idea for an app and need to know how to create it? If so then Computing is for you. On this course you will learn how to write code and understand computers and their role in society.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

This course you will follow will result in a getting a full GCSE.

**What will I study?**

Computer systems and programming – the hardware, software and interfaces that make up computers, networking and storage, how computers think and count, how to construct a program and code solutions. The theory element of this course will show you how computers work and what’s going on behind the scenes when you’re using them.

There is also a big focus on the practical side of computing too. There are two units – the first requires you to investigate and test existing applications showing you understand how they work. The second requires you to actually write programs to solve specific tasks.

**What skills do I need?**

Curiosity and a logical mind will help! You need to be organised and be prepared to take risks and learn independently. Good ICT skills are important as is the ability to research topics and present them clearly.

**How will I be assessed?**

There is a written theory paper worth 40% of the overall mark plus 2 controlled assessments worth 30% each. The first controlled assessment is a practical examination of an existing solution; the second is writing code to solve a problem.

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

You could go on to study A Level Computing or ICT or go straight into employment. There is a skills gap in the market at the moment and companies are crying out for students with computing skills – this course could be the first step towards a university course or a career in games, films, animation or a number of other careers.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Your ICT subject teacher; Mr S Barron or Mr R Steed for more details.

**CORE ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME – (by invitation only)**

Core Enrichment is exactly ‘what is says on the package’ – the opportunity for pupils to take part in enrichment activities, mainly focusing on English and Maths in year 9.

Some pupils have difficulty achieving their target grades in all subjects and would benefit from the opportunity to work on improving literacy and numeracy skills. Therefore, by reducing the number of GCSE subjects studied, along with the overall benefits from following this programme, pupils may then be in a better position to achieve their target grades and to be successful in all subjects.

In addition, the Core Enrichment pathway, as they move in to years 10 and 11, will allow some students the opportunity to take part in a College Courses; complete a City and Guilds Basic Construction certificate, attend Work Experience Placement or to continue with additional enrichment lessons.

**Life Skills**

**Asdan Award Bronze/Silver**

Plus

**English & Maths**

****

**Possible Work Experience placement in Year 11**

**City & Guilds**

**Basic Construction Skills**

**‘BasCo’**

**Plus**

**English & Maths**

****

**Possible Work Experience placement in Year 11**

**College Course**

 **in Years 10 & 11**

**Plus**

**English & Maths**

**Core Enrichment Programme**

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mrs C Hewitson/ Mrs C Casewell

**DRAMA**

The GCSE Drama course is a fantastic opportunity for you to develop your skills as an actor as well as increasing confidence and enhancing social skills. You will work in intimate groups to take part in class practical, workshops and studies of all aspects of the theatre - lighting, sound, sets and costume.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

**Route 1:** Acting - full GCSE

**Route 2:** Performance support - full GCSE

**Route 3:** Performance - entry level. (Only available if there are 4 or more suitable candidates)

**What will I study?**

**UNIT 1 -** This will be an exploration of a topic/theme/issue of your teacher’s choice. It will contain of a total of 6 practical lessons in which you will be marked by your teacher throughout. You will be marked on your ideas, contribution, performances and your evaluations. Within this unit you will also produce a documentary response (Drama Portfolio) as evidence of your work and understanding.

**UNIT 2 -** This unit also consists of a six hour practical exam, which will happen in lesson time. Within the workshops you will be exploring a text which you would have already studied. Once again marks will be given for ideas, contribution commitment, performances and reflection. Documentary response to the practical exam will also be produced for this unit as well as a review of live theatre.

**UNIT 3 -** Here you will demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of practical drama skills through your application in a live performance. This is where you will create a polished performance for the examiner to mark. You will receive a brief from the exam board which will give you a stimulus to work from.

**What skills do I need?**

It’s not all about talent. The course is dependant on pupils who are **willing** to try new things and who are prepared to apply a **mature** approach to their studies.

**Initiative, working to deadlines and being an effective team member** are all vital aspects of GCSE Drama and having a positive attitude when approaching written work.

**How will I be assessed?**

**3 units of work**

* **3 pieces of written** **coursework and practical sessions 60%** of the course and is teacher marked.
* The **examination consists of 40%** of the final mark and is assessed externally. For this part of the course, pupils are required to either act in a piece of scripted theatre, prepare a larger improvised piece or to offer technical support to a group of actors.

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

Professional acting or writing for stage, film and television, radio presenting, education, stage management, production elements such as lighting, set design and costume. Some of students have gone on to study Drama with English, Media Studies, Art, Business and Law at University.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mrs S Wise -Subject Leader for Drama and Mrs S Caton - Drama teacher

**ENGINEERING**

Intended as an introduction to Engineering, this qualification allows students to develop skills and understanding which will be of use generally and as part of a career path leading to further technical or academic engineering qualifications. GCSE Engineering will provide a clear progression route to apprenticeships and possible careers in Engineering, Mechanics, Design and Manufacturing as well as Engineering courses in Further Education. This qualification could also provide a firm foundation for A level courses here at school in Product Design or Engineering and ultimately lead to a degree in Engineering.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

The AQA Engineering course is a full GCSE award.

**What will I study?**

During year 9 you will complete a transition project to get you used to working with tools and materials. Presently in Year 9 pupils make their own tool box and manufacture a bottle opener and centre finder in steel. During year 9 you will also learn how to draw accurately using CAD programmes like Pro Desktop and Google Sketchup. During year 10 and 11 you will experience education and training to meet the needs of employers and employees in a range of engineering disciplines including electronics and pneumatics. You will learn about new Engineering processes, machining operations and the correct use of tools and equipment. Tasks are set by the examining board and allow you to learn a wide range of skills at the same time producing a portfolio of project work.

**What skills do I need?**

You need to be keen to problem solve and have an interest into how things work. Also like making things and working with tools and materials (particularly metals) associated with an engineering workshop and engineered products.

**How will I be assessed?**

Engineering is split into two Units; Unit 1 is a written exam lasting 1 hour (40% of the GCSE). This consists of two sections, a Product Study section (based on information made available in a Preparation Sheet) and a section on Manufacturing and Materials. Unit 2 is a practical task (60% of the GCSE) which is an engineering product manufactured in school.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mr M Potts or Mr A Evans

**FASHION/TEXTILES**

The Fashion/Textiles GCSE is a practical-based subject which requires students to apply knowledge and understanding of how fashion garments, textile products and furnishings are developed, planned, produced and evaluated. Products that we make need to meet the demands of clients and consumers. We need to also consider moral, cultural, economic and social values and take into account environmental issues and smart/modern materials.

This subject allows you to be creative, innovative and to make your own choices. It includes research and practical tasks as well as providing opportunities to show flair and creativity and gives an insight into the fashion industry.

**What will I study?**

The course is practically based and includes theory which supports the activities done in class. You will learn new skills and it is an area that allows independent learning as well as encouraging you to work as part of a team. In year 9 you will be developing skills which are essential for the designing and making of products and you will be able to investigate a wide range of techniques which you will be able to utilise later in the course. In year 10 you will undergo a series of interesting, stimulating and diverse modules which will enable you to develop essential technological skills. This prepares you well for year 11, when the major GCSE project takes place. Activities and Projects include Skirt/Shorts Project, Children’s Dress Project, Designer Projects, Group Design Tasks and Printing work. You will be encouraged to be influenced and inspired by current fashion designers and upcoming trends.

**What skills do I need?**

A good eye for fashion and flair for colour however new skills will be taught throughout the three years.

**How will I be assessed?**

The course consists of two units both examined in year 11:

**Coursework** (a design folio and a 3-dimensional outcome)

60% of total marks

This is the major GCSE project and accounts for approximately 45 hours.

**Written Examination** (2 hours)

40% of total marks

The paper has two sections and candidates must answer all questions. There is one tier of entry.

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

This leads well into A Level Fashion/Textiles taught at Alsager School. Students who are considering Fashion GCSE as an option should be committed and hard working.

The course provides excellent links into careers in fashion; designing for the stage; product and interior design and the Textile industry. It also links into further and higher educational courses.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mrs L Howard (Subject Leader)

**FOOD TECHNOLOGY**

This subject allows you to be creative as well as a problem solver. It includes research and practical tasks as well as providing opportunities to investigate how diet and healthy eating influence the Food Industry. Products are designed and then modified to fit different requirements.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

This GCSE specification has a **unitised** structure and there is one tier of assessment .

**What will I study?**

There is a practical session each week and this allows you to choose your own dishes to fit the current theme. You will learn new skills and it is an area that allows independent learning as well as encouraging you to work as part of a team.

In year 9 you will have the opportunity to create a range of dishes to develop your practical skills and learn about decorative techniques, as well as enjoying experimenting with foods from other countries. You will be required to bring ingredients for practicals on a weekly basis.

**What skills do I need?**

Desirable skills include: Organisation, flexibility, creativity and an interest in technology and food.

Also, the ability to think on your feet and be adaptable

**How will I be assessed?**

There is a Major Project (coursework) which carries 60% of the marks and one written paper which carries 40% of the final GCSE mark. Both are examined in year 11.

The written paper is outlined below:

One paper with two sections:-
**Section A**
30 marks
A design question based on context supplied before the exam
**Section B**
90 marks
Covers all aspects of the specification content
All questions are compulsory

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

This subject leads well into A Level Food taught at Alsager School.

Careers in the Food Industry - manufacturing, retail, product development.

Catering and the hotel industry- chef, supervisor, management.

Nutritionist or a dietician.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mrs J Halse or Mrs D West

**FRENCH**

It’s a multilingual world- and contrary to popular belief - not everyone speaks English! In fact 75% of the world does not speak English. Don’t get left behind. Learning French to a higher level is not only fun but will give you immense satisfaction and the opportunity to improve your understanding of another culture. A qualification in French will also open up a wide range of exciting career possibilities and give you a distinct edge in the job marketplace.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

GCSE Full Course. Exam Board: AQA

Pupils are offered a 3 year course of study leading towards a full GCSE qualification in French

**What will I study?**

* We will explore a wide range of topics such as: leisure; work experience; shopping; food and drink; tourism and environmental issues. You will learn how to react to real life situations in French, such as you might experience when on holiday, for example seeking medical assistance, buying souvenirs, booking into accommodation, eating out etc.
* In addition to developing your basic oral skills, you will also learn to use your French more imaginatively and creatively. We will help you to improve skills which are useful in other subjects, such as presentation skills and using information technology.
* Most lessons will be interactive and a range of media will be employed. You will have the opportunity to experience a range of more intense short-term projects linked to French culture and civilisation.
* You will develop your confidence in the spoken language by means of the many facilities offered by the multi-media language lab and by working in small groups.

**What skills do I need?**

Pupils will need to have enthusiasm and also the confidence to participate orally in lessons. Good memory skills are an advantage but these naturally will be developed over the three years of the course. Pupils do need to have studied French in years 7 and 8 to be able to opt into this GCSE course.

**How will I be assessed?**

Due to the changes in GCSEs, the exact details around the exams have not been finalised, but it is anticipated that at the end of year 11 you will take 3 GCSE examination papers – Reading, Writing and Listening, as well as a Speaking assessment. You will be assessed on your comprehension of dialogues as well as a variety of written materials. In the written exam, you will be tested on your ability to write spontaneously using different registers. The final grade will be made up as follows:-

**Listening - 25% Reading – 25% Writing – 25% Speaking – 25%.**

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

Whichever career path you choose to pursue, the ability to speak and understand a foreign language will be viewed as a great asset by any prospective employer. You could go on to study French combined with a range of quite varied subjects such as Sciences, Law, History, Business, Art or Maths for example, at Degree Level. There is a range of career prospects in areas such as Banking, the Police, the Travel Industry, Education, Media and Communications, Retail, Sport and Leisure and Manufacturing for individuals with qualifications in French.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mr A Green - (Acting Curriculum Leader)

**GEOGRAPHY**

Are you interested in the world all around you? Do you want to be able to make informed decisions about where to work, live and go on holiday? Are you concerned about the environment? Do you want to develop skills you will find useful long after you have left school?

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

GCSE Geography is available for all students. In some case Short Course GCSE may be made available.

**What will I study?**

This modern, up-to-date course focuses on the topics of; Challenges for our Planet (Global Warming/Climate Change) and Geographical Skills (including Map Skills); Tectonics (Volcanoes & Earthquakes), River and Coastal Landscapes; Economic, Settlement and Population Change, Tourism; and a Fieldwork Investigation (Coursework).

During the course you can expect to:

* undertake a fieldtrip to experience first-hand research and complete a fieldwork investigation;
* have the opportunity to go on an enrichment trip (previous trips include visits to Iceland and Italy);
* head out of the classroom on a regular basis to explore the local area;
* work creatively in groups on projects and presentations;
* develop a variety of skills such as research, co-operation and teamwork.

**What skills do I need?**

If you enjoy learning in a variety of styles and want a varied course that covers important topics that are in the news then Geography may be for you. You need to be enthusiastic and interested in the world around you.

**How will I be assessed?**

**100% exam** – broken down into end of course exams, including examinations based on two pieces of fieldwork.

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

Geography is valued by a range of employers. You could become anything from a lawyer to a conservationist, a pilot to a sports manager. The subject’s broad nature and variety mean that there are hundreds of careers that geographers move into!

**Who should I contact for more details?**

See your Geography teacher or Mr A McFadden

**GERMAN**

In Europe the first language of business is German. Think Siemens, BMW, PUMA, Mercedes-Benz, Adidas, Volkswagen, Hugo Boss, Audi. Germany has the largest economy in the European Union and the third largest in the world. It is the world’s leading exporter and importer.

In today’s unstable climate business is more important than ever. Germany's economic strength equals business opportunities and those with knowledge of German will certainly edge out the competition in the jobs market.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

GCSE Full Course. Exam Board: AQA

Pupils are offered a 3 year course of study leading towards a full GCSE qualification in German.

**What will I study?**

In GCSE German you will not only develop your understanding of Germany and German speaking countries, but also broaden your knowledge of grammar and how to apply it and more importantly increase your ability to communicate in writing and speech. You will cover topics such as: everyday activities; personal and social life; the world around us; the world of work; the international world.

**What skills do I need?**

You will currently be studying German in year 8 to be eligible for this course. GCSE German is made up of four elements; listening, reading, speaking and writing. You will need to practise your skills in all four areas. In addition you will be expected to learn vocabulary on a regular basis therefore a good memory will really help!

**How will I be assessed?**

Due to the changes in GCSEs, the exact details around the exams have not been finalised, but it is anticipated that at the end of year 11 you will take 3 GCSE examination papers – Reading, Writing and Listening, as well as a Speaking assessment. You will be assessed on your comprehension of dialogues as well as a variety of written materials. In the written exam, you will be tested on your ability to write spontaneously using different registers. The final grade will be made up as follows:-

**Listening - 25% Reading – 25% Writing – 25% Speaking – 25%.**

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

A language complements any combination of subjects and you will find it useful in almost any field of work. Popular pathways at university are German and Law, German and Business, yet we have had a student who has gone on to study German and Chemistry. The world is a much smaller place and learning a language will only enhance the other skills on your CV. Translation, interpreting and working within the EU are all options available to you should you choose to study German.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mr A Green - (Acting Curriculum Leader)

**GRAPHIC PRODUCTS (D&T)**

The Graphic Products course is designed to provide opportunities in designing, making and evaluating which focus on visual impact and communication skills utilising a range of media. Whether or not you choose to take up employment as an architect, engineer, draughtsperson or graphic designer, it is important that everyone develops a graphical awareness which will help you respond to the visual world we live in.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

The Edexcel Graphic Products course at GCSE awards grades up to A\*.

**What will I study?**

When studying design and technology at school, you will be expected to act as a responsible designer whilst generating designs to solve problems or satisfy needs. The Graphic Products course is concerned with the activity of designing and making with graphic materials and ICT. During year 9 you will work on transition projects that will provide you with the graphic skills for success at GCSE. You will develop your drawing techniques looking at **pictograms** and **typography**. In year 10 you will concentrate on the **design of packaging** and **Logo design**, this will provide you with a starting point for the major project a **Point of Sale Display** that will take you through to Christmas in Year 11. In all these graphic assignments you will produce product outcomes as two and three dimensional models using software programmes like Photoshop and Serif Draw to enhance your ideas.

**What skills do I need?**

You need to be interested and have an aptitude for graphic design drawing and modelling demonstrating precision and accuracy in your design drawing as well as a particular aptitude for ICT. You will need to be innovative and imaginative and demonstrate ingenuity when thinking of ways to solve problems for the real world and improve the environment that we live in.

**How will I be assessed?**

In Graphic Products the Creative Design and Make major project (Unit 1) is based on the **Point of Sale** display unit promoting your own designed product. This **accounts for 60% of your final mark**. The **written examination** (Knowledge and Understanding of Graphic Products - Unit 2) consists of one examination paper which is based on you applying your knowledge and understanding and is set by the examination board. This **accounts for 40% of your final** mark.

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

This course will give you the skills to follow Graphic Design and Product Design courses at A Level here at Alsager. These A Levels can lead on to degree courses in, for example, Graphic design, Architecture, Interior design, Fashion design and Multimedia design at university.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mr A Pennance, Mr A Evans, Mr S Harbour or Mr M Potts.

**HISTORY**

Are you interested in people? Do you want to know what has motivated people in the past to create the world we live in? Choosing History will give you the opportunity to study the lives of people in the past and how their experiences affect our lives today and in the future. Interesting and exciting aspects of human life will be considered through a wide range of enjoyable learning experiences. Studying GCSE History will help you develop valuable life skills such as learning to argue, thinking analytically and evaluating different view points.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

Students will achieve a History GCSE. Where appropriate, some students may attain the short course GCSE qualification or the Entry Level Certificate.

**What will I study?**

* You will engage in individual and group research; studies of documents, artefacts and film; discussion and debate; writing activities and presentations.
* You will go on school trips to enhance your understanding of the course.

In year 9 you will study four units which will develop the skills that you will require for GCSE:

**Manchester through time**: From its early settlement through to the industrial revolution, slum living and the development of its football teams. You will also examine its History in more recent years, for example the impact of the IRA bomb, the Commonwealth games and its shopping centres. This unit will develop your understanding of chronology and change over time.

**The History of Terrorism**: You will explore examples of terrorism in History from the Gunpowder plot, to Northern Ireland, Al Qaeda and South Africa. You will be investigating different interpretations of History, for example was Nelson Mandela a Terrorist or Freedom fighter?

**Conspiracy Theories**: You will be using a range of source material to investigate conspiracy theories in History. You will be examining The Space Landing, Watergate and the mysterious case of Jack the Ripper. This unit will develop your ability to analyse sources and reach well-supported conclusions.

**History and film:** You will evaluate the historical accuracy of film. You will explore a period in depth and then evaluate how accurately this era has been represented in film. You will develop the ability to analyse the provenance of sources.

**How will I be assessed?**

You will be assessed though regular GCSE style exam questions. You will practice writing answers in timed conditions to prepare you for your GCSE examinations at the end of year 11.

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

History is an academic subject which focuses upon the study of people. Accordingly, History provides excellent preparation for any career which requires precision of thought and an ability to engage with people. This subject is regarded highly by employers and universities alike.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Your History teacher or Mrs R Abbotson (Subject Leader)

**INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Technology is all around us and you need to understand ICT to get the most out of the opportunities it offers. GCSE ICT will teach you about the way in which technology and computers are changing the world. You will learn about emerging technologies and the impact that they could have on our lives – can you imagine a world where your computer will make everyday items for you instead of buying them from a shop? Your ICT, research and design skills will also be tested to see if you can create a range of suitable documents for a given scenario. Basically ICT is the future and you should be prepared!

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

This course you will follow will result in a getting a full GCSE.

**What will I study?**

On this course your studies will be split into 2 units;

**Unit 1: Living in the digital world**

* Explore how digital technology impacts on the lives of individuals, organisations and society.
* Learn about current and emerging digital technologies and the issues raised by their use in a range of contexts (learning and earning, leisure, shopping and money management, health and wellbeing and on the move).
* Develop awareness of the risks associated with using ICT and the features of safe, secure and responsible practice.

**Unit 2: Using Digital tools**

* This is a practical unit.
* You will broaden and enhance your ICT skills and capability.
* You will be expected to work with a range of digital tools and techniques to produce effective ICT solutions in a range of contexts.
* You will learn to reflect critically on your own and others’ use of ICT and to adopt safe, secure and responsible practice.

**What skills do I need?**

You will need to organised, be able to work independently to complete a controlled assessment. You will need to be able to do research, keep up to date with changes in ICT and new technology and obviously good computer skills are important.

**How will I be assessed?**

* Unit 1: Living in the digital world is assessed by an exam and worth 40% of the overall mark
* Unit 2: Using Digital tools is assessed using controlled assessment and worth 60% of the overall mark

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

You could go on to study A Level ICT or go straight into employment. Most employers are looking for applicants with good ICT skills so a GCSE in ICT is a good choice no matter what profession you are looking to enter. Past students have gone onto study a wide variety of ICT related courses at university including Animation, Computing and Business Studies.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Your ICT subject teacher or Mr S Barron.

**MUSIC**

If you enjoy; composing and performing music; learning an instrument or singing; creating music on computers or in a recording studio; learning about all types of music, including pop, rock, jazz, dance, world and classical music then our GCSE Music is the ideal subject for you.

**What will I study?**

You will; develop and improve your performing skills; learn how music is constructed from initial ideas through to the finished product; learn to analyse music in a variety of styles and discover the social and historical context in which music has been composed including rock, pop, jazz, dance, world and classical music.

**What skills do I need?**

You have already gained many of the basic skills needed for this course in your music lessons over the last two years at secondary school.

• You have been introduced to **creating music of your own** in class and this is developed on the GCSE course as you choose two topics for composition. For example, this could be a popular song and a dance track, a classical piece or some world music. There is a wide choice and it can be tailored to your own musical interests and strengths.

• You have already **listened to a variety of music** in class and these skills are developed as you study some set pieces taken from the classical, 20th century, popular and world music Areas of Study.

• You enjoy **making music**, either as a soloist or in a group. The GCSE course encourages you to perform music of your own choosing and in any style, as a soloist and also in a group. To take this course, you must be able to offer at least one instrument/or voice.

**How will I be assessed?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Performing** | **Composing** | **Listening & Appraising** |
| You will need to play one solo piece and one ensemble piece. | You will need to create two compositions. | You will sit a 90 minute written paper with questions on your prescribed set works. Questions such as these are asked:• ‘Name the instrument playing the solo’• ‘Give two musical reasons why you like or dislike this piece of music.’• ‘This theme is shared between two instrumental families? What are they?’ |

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

If you enjoyed the GCSE Music course then you can consider an:

• AS and A2 in Music

• Extended diploma in Music Technology

• AS and A2 in Performing Arts.

Your listening skills will enhance the aural perception needed in language examinations. Your performing skills will give you confidence in playing to an audience – useful if you intend to pursue, for example, drama or law.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mr V Galley (Subject Leader) or Miss E Higton

**RESISTANT MATERIALS (D&T)**

 We are surrounded by ever changing technology. Whether or not you choose to take up employment in the manufacturing sector, it is important that everyone continues to develop their technological awareness. This full GCSE course enables you to design and manufacture products using woods, metals and plastics using the tools and machinery in the school workshops.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

The Edexcel Resistant Materials course is a full GCSE award.

**What will I study?**

During year 9 you will work on the **Hanging Basket Project** during the autumn term. During the spring and summer terms and into year 10 you will work on an extended **Desk Tidy Project** that can be designed using a range of resistant materials. These projects will also involve focussed skill based practical tasks to build up your skill level using tools and materials. During the course you will be expected to act as a responsible designer whilst generating designs to solve problems or satisfy needs, and you will work on projects that follow closely the format of the major project at GCSE. The course is concerned with the activity of designing and making which is delivered principally through wood, metal and plastics although electronics may also be used as a complement to working with resistant materials. The major project controlled task (**The Clock Project**) for GCSE is started in the spring term of year 10 and continues through to the spring term of year 11.

At the same time during the course we spend one lesson per fortnight following a well designed programme of theory based on improving your knowledge and understanding of the subject.

**What skills do I need?**

You need to be interested and have an aptitude for working with tools and materials in all aspects of Design and Technology. You will need to be innovative and imaginative and demonstrate ingenuity when thinking of ways to solve problems for the real world.

**How will I be assessed?**

In Resistant Materials the Creative Design and Make major project (Unit 1) is based on the theme of a **Clock**. This **accounts for 60% of your final mark**. The written examination (Knowledge and Understanding of RMT- Unit 2) consists of **one examination paper** which is based on you applying your knowledge and understanding of RMT. This accounts for **40% of your final mark**.

**Where could this subject lead me to in the future?**

The RMT course gives you ideal preparation for A Level Product Design here at Alsager, which can then lead onto courses in, for example, motor vehicle design and civil engineering etc at university and FE College.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mr A Evans, Mr S Harbour, Mr A Pennance or Mr M Potts.

**SPANISH**

The Spanish speaking world is growing fast. In 2011, 470 million people in the world spoke Spanish. It is predicted that there will be 530 million Spanish speakers by 2050. Spanish has roughly the same number of first language speakers as English.

Although on average 16.5 million British tourists visit Spain every year, the top five Spanish-speaking nations are Mexico (100 million), Colombia (44.5 million), Spain (44 million), Argentina (38.5 million) and the USA (38 million). That’s a lot of people speaking Spanish!

Will you be one of them?

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

GCSE Full Course Exam Board: AQA

Pupils are offered a 3 year course of study leading towards a full GCSE qualification in Spanish.

**What will I study?**

In GCSE Spanish you will not only develop your understanding of el mundo hispano, but also broaden your knowledge of grammar and how to apply it and more importantly increase your ability to communicate in writing and speech. You will cover topics such as: everyday activities; personal and social life; the world around us; the world of work; the international world.

**What skills do I need?**

This option is available to all pupils in year 8 who are currently studying Spanish. You will have to practise your reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in Spanish lessons and be able to learn vocabulary regularly. You should enjoy learning Spanish in Year 8 and want to learn more.

**How will I be assessed?**

Due to the changes in GCSEs, the exact details around the exams have not been finalised, but it is anticipated that at the end of year 11 you will take 3 GCSE examination papers – Reading, Writing and Listening, as well as a Speaking assessment. You will be assessed on your comprehension of dialogues as well as a variety of written materials. In the written exam, you will be tested on your ability to write spontaneously using different registers. The final grade will be made up as follows:-

**Listening - 25% Reading – 25% Writing – 25% Speaking – 25%.**

**Where could this subject lead me in the future?**

Being skilled in the fourth most spoken language (after Mandarin Chinese, English and Hindustani) will enhance your opportunities of success in any number of professions from Medicine through Law and Engineering to Business. Universities all look very favourably on applicants who have studied a foreign language.

Stand out from the crowd and learn the fourth most widely-used language in the world.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mr A Green (Acting Curriculum Leader)

**SPORTS STUDIES**

From performer to pundit, the world of sport is an exciting place to be. The sports studies course is an introduction to both GCSE and BTEC PE and looks to prepare pupils for this fast developing industry. Students will participate in a range of sports and undertake a variety of roles such as a performer, official, coach and leader. The sports studies course combines elements of both the GCSE and BTEC courses. At the end of year 9 each student will be guided into the sports pathway that best suits their learning style and aspirations for the remaining two years of the course.

**What qualifications are available within this subject?**

The two courses we are offering are: **GCSE PE** or **BTEC Level 1 and Level 2 First Award in Sport**

**What will I study?**

**GCSE PE**

This course is a blend of both practical and theoretical PE. The practical aspect will enhance ability in a wide range of activities as a performer and many practical activities are studied throughout the course; if you compete in a sport outside of school you may be able to use this as part of your assessed marks. In the theoretical aspect of the course you will cover topics such as: science and technology in sport; health and fitness; media and sponsorship.

**BTEC Level 1 and Level 2 First Award in Sport**

You will need to be prepared to take part in practical and theory lessons and assessments. This course enables students to develop skills in a more ‘vocational’ way to GCSE students with many of the assessments being in the form of: video performances; written assignments; presentations; information guides and posters; as well as an online examination.

**How will I be assessed?**

**GCSE PE**

* **Practical 60%** - You need four sports in which you will be assessed.
* **Theory 40%** - This will be examined in a **90 minute written paper** which will include multiple choice, short answer and scenario based questions.

**BTEC Level 1 and Level 2 First Award in Sport**

There is a 25% external examination which is completed as an online test. The remaining 75% of the BTEC is assessed using from various forms of coursework, such as work projects, assignments and presentations.

**What skills do I need?**

You need to be interested, enthusiastic and have an aptitude for the world of sport!! Do you participate in sport? Do you love watching sport? Do you like to volunteer in sport? If yes, yes, yes then this is the course for you. You will need to be eager to learn about different aspects and theories of sport as well as performing in a range of activities.

**Where could this subject lead me in the future?**

You could go on to continued education, in the form of A Levels & BTEC awards which in turn can lead to University and Higher Education. You would also be well placed to follow more ‘vocational’ sporting employment e.g. Coaching, Physiotherapy, Sports Development, Teaching, the Army or Sport Science.

**Who should I contact for more details?**

Mrs H Salt (Curriculum Leader) and Mr M Bennett (Deputy Curriculum Leader)

