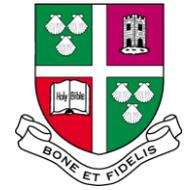


# WOODHOUSE GROVE SCHOOL



## Year 9 Curriculum Guide 2021

### Introduction

Year 9 is very much a transition year, both academically and socially, during which pupils are preparing for, or in some cases, starting on, their GCSE courses. Pupils are encouraged to take more responsibility for their own actions and to be involved in making choices that may affect their futures.

### Curriculum

The Year 9 curriculum is as follows:

A 'core' curriculum of

Mathematics English Science (as three subjects)	Taught in sets
Geography History R.S.	Taught in forms
PE PSHEE	Mixed ability single-sex groups
Games	One afternoon per week

The 'options' curriculum:

Pupils also have to study three of the following subjects: art, computing, design technology, drama, French, German, music and Spanish.

All students are expected to study at least one language subject\*. Otherwise pupils are given a free choice of options subject. However, for timetabling purposes, pupils are asked to choose four subjects in order of priority; where possible pupils will be given their preferred choice, but this cannot be guaranteed. In making their choices pupils should consider their ability in each subject and whether they are likely to wish to continue with a subject to GCSE. If a pupil wishes to study computing, French, German or Spanish at GCSE it is essential they choose these subjects in Year 9, and it is recommended that they do so for design technology.

### Options Choices

The process of choosing Year 9 options subjects begins in the Spring Term of Year 8, with the issuing of the Year 9 Curriculum Guide, which contains descriptions of all the options subjects. Pupils will then spend preparation time in PSHEE lessons and tutor periods before making a choice of options subjects in consultation with their parents/guardians.

Pupils and/or their parents can make an appointment to see one of the careers staff if they feel that they would benefit from additional help to make the option choices.

### Academic and pastoral monitoring

Academic monitoring is carried out in the first instance by the subject teachers and heads of each department. The year head is kept informed of all progress and has a detailed knowledge of the achievements of every child in this area of the school.

A full written report will be issued twice a year, with interim reports issued on two further occasions. Reports can be accessed via Firefly. End of year examinations will take place in the summer term.

Pastoral and disciplinary matters are also the concern of the head of year. Any parent who wishes to discuss his or her child should, in the first instance, contact his/her head of year.

### Attendance details

Absence/Leave: any request for leave from school should be addressed to the Headmaster. If a pupil is absent from school through illness we ask the parents to inform the school by telephone immediately. In the case of a protracted absence, please contact the head of year.

**The remainder of this booklet provides detailed descriptions of the subjects offered in the Year 9 curriculum.**

\*Pupils already attending the Learning Support Unit may opt not to choose a language in Year 9.

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### Contact details

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## **ART & DESIGN**

### **Aims**

The aims of the Art & Design department for Year 9 are:

- To build on the positive experiences of Art and Design from Years 7 and 8.
- To use artistic expression in order to communicate in visual and tactile ways.
- To further develop creative and technical skills so that pupils can produce artefacts and realise their own ideas.
- To develop pupils' confidence and competence in reading and evaluating visual images and artefacts, as well as developing their enthusiasm about art and design and to encourage their capacity to enjoy art within society.
- To introduce students to a variety of skills and techniques which will be needed at the start of GCSE

### **Organisation**

Groups are by option blocks in Year 9 and are mixed ability. At present there are two option blocks, which are split between two members of staff.

### **Teaching Methods**

All work is practical, although an understanding of the works of other artists, craftspeople and designers is encouraged through video, presentation and personal study. Work is in two and three dimensions and includes drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, ceramics, digital and mixed media. Each term students look at a theme / area of study or specific technique and develop their own work in response to the starting point, with guidance and teaching from the art department staff.

Themes include:

- Pop Art Portraits
- Surrealism
- Ceramic Vessels
- Personal Project (own choice) – to prepare for GCSE

### **Progression**

Within the department we use the first three years of teaching as a foundation course in the skills and expectations required at GCSE level. In Year 9 we use a working method that leads directly into the type of practical work expected by EDUQAS, the exam board we use for art and design GCSE. This allows students to start the GCSE course with confidence as they adopt a familiar approach to making practical work.

### **Extra Costs**

Extra costs are charged after opting for Art & Design in Year 9 where the use of more expensive materials is offset by a charge of £10 for the autumn and spring terms only.

## **COMPUTING**

### **Aims**

The Year 9 computing curriculum is designed to challenge students and develop and extend their computing and IT knowledge and experience from Years 7 and 8. Additionally, students will be introduced to some of the concepts for the optional GCSE Computer Science course at Years 10 and 11.

### **Topics include:**

- Cybersecurity, including potential threats to networks and computer systems, and methods of protecting against them.
- Data Science and 'big data'.
- Creating 3D models and animations using Blender.
- Developing coding skills using the BBC micro:bit
- Building on their Year 8 text programming and developing sequencing with Python.
- Creating and editing digital media using GIMP graphics design software and Audacity audio editing software

### **Organisation**

Groups are mixed ability.

### **Teaching Methods**

The course will be a mixture of theory work (both in class and for homework) and hands-on practice, but with greater emphasis on the practical. Teaching is by specialist staff with back-up from the ICT technicians.

### **Progression**

The Year 9 course leads to an optional GCSE in Computer Science in Years 10 and 11 as offered by OCR. It is highly recommended that the computing option is taken in Year 9 if the GCSE is to be chosen. The Year 9 course has been designed to introduce students to some key areas which will be studied in further detail at GCSE. Further opportunity for study within the department is offered in the sixth form with an A-level course in Computer Science, offering a chance to learn a programming language in far more depth and go into more detail about how computers work.

## **DESIGN and TECHNOLOGY**

### **Aims**

The aims of the Design and Technology course in Year 9 are

- To develop, to broaden and to build upon the basic course in Years 7 and 8.
- To develop further a knowledge of materials and processes
- To broaden an enquiring approach to design
- To develop further the communication skills necessary for effective design folder work.

### **Organisation**

Groups are mixed ability; each group will cover the two main material areas of wood and metal/plastics for half the year in each area/project. They will complete a design folder and practical piece of work in each area.

### **Teaching Methods**

Each group will have a mixture of lessons for design development and practical work, and also taught lessons for technology theory, including theory based prep tasks.

The practical work is based on the main material being used – either wood or metal/plastics and after the design folder is completed, we move into the workshops to realise the student's designs.

### **Topics Covered**

These will include: -

- Workshop Safety
- Design and Communication Skills
- Properties of Wood, Metal and Plastics
- Measuring and Marking Out of Materials
- Shaping and Joining of Materials
- Fixings and Fittings
- Finishing of Materials.
- CAD/CAM technologies and machinery

### **Progression**

The Practical experience and Technology specific knowledge and understanding built up during Year 9 will form an essential basis for the GCSE Design and Technology course followed in Years 10 and 11. This GCSE Design and Technology Course is taken with the AQA Examination Board.

The use of ICT is encouraged throughout the course and in particular the use of CAD/CAM and realisation of practical work using these new technologies

### **Extra Costs**

Students are expected to pay for the materials used in their practical projects which will obviously go home when completed and marked. The cost of the materials used by individual pupils is added to their account at the end of term.

## **DRAMA**

### **Aims**

Pupils will learn a number of Key Skills throughout the course:

- An extensive range of the use of dramatic language.
- Social interaction, team work, problem solving, compromise and negotiation.
- Research, analysis and interpretation. How to be a good audience.
- Drama specific skills, e.g. acting, use of the voice and the body, using Drama Conventions, structuring and exploration of genre, devising theatre, the work of Theatre Practitioners, the theatre crafts and film-making.
- Appraisal of practice and/or evaluation of self and others.

### **Organisation**

Two or three mixed ability options groups, staffed with drama specialists.

The course is split into three main projects, one per term, which include: a project on witchcraft followed by Christmas literature; directing/designing for a scripted performance and creating/producing a devised performance.

### **Teaching methods**

This is a very practically based course with a drama Journal in which pupils will evaluate their own work and the work of others. Pupils are taught in full groups or in smaller groups.

Assessment is on-going throughout the course and pupils get a percentage and grade at the end of each project. The pupils will also complete an end-of-year exam, which is largely practical, with an additional written evaluation element.

Pupils will learn to use the Key Concepts of Drama within each project: fiction or pretence, character or role, conflict or tension, symbol or metaphor, negotiation, dramatic convention/use of practitioners, dramatic context and language context.

### **Progression**

The Year 9 course consolidates the skills and understanding of drama conventions already covered in Years 7 and 8, and also extends their knowledge and understanding of a range of techniques. Pupils joining the school can be reassured that all the necessary techniques are revisited and revised within the Year 9 option. Pupils will again be covering topics/themes and drama conventions of a more challenging nature. Pupils will practise their evaluative skills as a progression into GCSE. A certain amount of individual work will be required.

The following will be covered:-

Thought Track, Flashback, Physical Theatre, Conscience, Whole Class Drama, Prepared Roles, Script Work and Off Text Work, Space and Levels, Theatre Practitioners, voice, movement and gesture, to a more challenging Level and Abstract Concepts.

The majority of Year 9 pupils should now be ready to begin the Drama GCSE course, with a clear foundation of knowledge, skills and understanding of drama and its forms and functions. They should now have the language and skills required for evaluation, and an awareness of how to direct, shape and structure a performance effectively for a range of audience responses. Pupils will be able to apply the work of a Theatre Practitioner and a variety of design skills.

## **ENGLISH**

### **Aims**

The English language and literature course in Year 9 has a number of aims. Firstly, we equip pupils with the fundamental skills they require to tackle the IGCSE course with confidence. Secondly, we continue the formal development of their awareness of language and their accuracy in spelling and grammar. Thirdly, we seek to foster an enjoyment of studying English, developing creativity and reading widely.

### **Organisation**

Pupils are taught in sets according to ability. Close links with the SEN department ensure that students with particular needs receive specialist support.

### **Teaching methods**

In English a variety of teaching methods are used. These include teacher-led lessons, pupil presentations, small group work, drama, collaborative and individual writing, research and ICT work. We also believe in independent learning.

Consequently, in the autumn term a period a week is set aside so that each pupil can write a detailed project about an issue, hobby, sport etc. that they particularly enjoy.

### Topics

Pupils encounter prose, drama (including Shakespeare), poetry, media and non-fiction texts from a range of eras. They will learn how to use quotations in essays, develop their ability to interpret texts and write for different audiences with a number of different purposes.

### Progression

The Year 9 course lays the foundations for IGCSE level courses in both English Language and English Literature. The department believes that by acquiring these skills in Year 9, pupils grow in confidence and maturity. Consequently, the leap from Year 9 to Year 10 is not as disarming as it could be.

## FRENCH, GERMAN & SPANISH

### Aims

- To develop pupils' ability to understand and use spoken and written French, German or Spanish.
- To increase knowledge of the structure of the language(s).
- To increase knowledge of French, German or Spanish culture.
- To provide a firm foundation for study of language at GCSE level.

### Organisation

French and Spanish are taught in ability sets. German is taught in mixed ability groups. All Year 9 work builds on the work covered in Years 7&8.

### Teaching Methods

We work from modern online text books (Expo/Dynamo, Stimmt, Viva) and we adopt an active approach in which pupils learn to communicate through a wide variety of activities, developing skills that are required at GCSE level.

Pupils are taught in the target language as much as possible and they are encouraged to use the target language themselves. Students have regular sessions with our foreign language assistants throughout Year 9.

The course books encourage pupils to revise and check their progress; there are regular end of topic tests and exposure to key GCSE skills. Grammar topics are covered in greater depth then and we expect pupils to acquire a good understanding of verbs and a wider range of vocabulary from which to tackle GCSE level work.

### Topics Covered:

French	Free Time
	Future Plans
	Health and Fitness
	Descriptions
	Holidays
	Social Issues

German	Family
	Home life
	Getting about
	Holidays
	Shopping and food
	Free Time
	Parts of the body/illness
	Making Plans
Spanish	Holidays
	Food/Drink
	Future plans & Careers
	Fair Trade

### Progression

The topics dealt with in Year 9 are covered in greater depth in Years 10 and 11 thus ensuring a logical progression to the AQA GCSE Modern Languages exams.

## GEOGRAPHY

### Aims

The department looks to:

- develop a sensitive awareness of the environment.
- encourage an appreciation of the significance of the attitudes and values of those who make decisions about the management of the environment and the use of terrestrial space.

### Organisation

Pupils are taught in mixed ability form groups by subject specialists.

### Teaching Methods

The structure of the course is modular with units designed to fit roughly into half-term teaching packages. The course is able to meet the needs of different ability levels with a strong emphasis placed on enquiry learning: pupils are encouraged to involve themselves in investigative work and to ask questions and seek answers.

Essential ICT skills, map reading, graph drawing and atlas work, tested recall sections, evaluations and judgements within debates and discussions all add to the variety of teaching approaches and techniques used in Year 9. The internet, DVDs and interactive whiteboards are additional audio-visual stimuli used to support our teaching of geography as a 'living subject'. Geography in Year 9 focuses on the Physical component on the AQA GCSE course.

### Topics Covered

Natural Hazards and Tectonic Hazards  
Weather Hazards  
Physical Landscapes in the UK  
Coastal Landscapes  
Local fieldwork

### Progression

The subject matter covered in Year 9 is contemporary and provides an important introduction to GCSE Geography in Years 10 and 11 (AQA Specification).

## **HISTORY**

*'If you don't know history, then you don't know anything. You are a leaf that doesn't know it is part of a tree.'* Michael Crichton

### **Aims**

History in Year 9 is primarily inspired by a wish to give individual pupils an understanding of their past and of society. History has a duty to ensure that individuals and society have 'self-knowledge' – that they have historical memory and are able to understand the past and hence not only have a partial grasp of the present.

We aim to stimulate interest in history through the use of enquiry and imagination and to create an awareness and understanding of what life in the past was like. History teaches a number of valuable skills including the clear expression of logical argument, relevant selection of material, fair assessment of character and the ability to see change and continuity over time.

We hope to stimulate an interest in and enthusiasm for the study of the past in preparation for GCSE and the pursuit of personal interest. We aim to develop the ability to understand interpretations of history and to produce a broad and balanced Year 9 curriculum suitable to the needs and interests of the pupils.

### **Organisation**

All Year 9 pupils are taught in their form sets and are taught by one of three teachers.

### **Teaching Methods**

A variety of teaching methods are used including the use of the following class texts:

- Wilkes, Revolution, Industry and Empire, 1558 to 1901 (e-textbook)
- Wilkes, Conflict and Tension: First World War 1894 to 1918 (e-textbook)

Interactive software (Boardworks) is also used frequently by all teaching staff.

We aim to further develop student understanding of ICT in preparation for the increased use of this at GCSE. All forms have to complete an essay and a source based assessment.

Pupils complete a project whereby they research an area of interest from WW1. This could include a range of topics from Conditions in the Trenches, Weapons of WW1 and Life for Women in the War amongst others, as well as being a study of a family member if a student has own personal knowledge and information to draw on. A visit to the WW1 battlefields in Belgium and France (Term 2) occurs annually. In the upper school we visit Auschwitz and Berlin on rotation which supports the history curriculum for Yrs 9- 12.

### **Topics Covered**

#### Term 1

Population Growth 1680 – 1900  
Industrial Revolution  
Textile Industry  
Coal Industry  
Transport Revolution  
Medical Revolutions in 19th and 20th centuries

#### Term 2

Causes of World War One  
What life was like for soldiers and civilians in WW1  
How WW1 came to an end

OPTIONAL TRIP AT EASTER TO THE WW1 BATTLEFIELDS IN FRANCE AND BELGIUM

#### Term 3

WW2 battles  
WW2 leaders  
Results of WW2 – around the world and in Britain  
A case- study of the British Empire: a force for good?

The KS3 curriculum is currently being reviewed by the department, so look out for exciting new content coming soon.

### **Progression**

The Year 9 history course continues the chronological approach pupils have studied in the lower school. In Year 9, particularly in terms 2 and 3, pupils will cover key aspects of the 20th century which will be particularly advantageous to GCSE History (our syllabus is Cambridge IGCSE – Modern World 20th century)

History is an excellent subject for GCSE. It helps students understand the origins of modern political and social problems, developing skills to look beyond the headlines, to ask questions properly and to express their own opinions. The Year 9 course has been specifically designed to introduce students to key areas which will be studied in further detail at GCSE.

### **Extra costs**

The trip to the WW1 battlefields is optional, with preference given to those intending to study the subject at GCSE. The trip is for 4 days by coach and costs approximately £400.

## **MATHEMATICS**

### **Aims**

All students study a three year IGCSE mathematics course across Years 9-11. During Year 9 the scheme of learning consists of a series of modules which lay the foundations in number, shape and algebra so that these topics can be reviewed and studied in greater depth during Years 10 and 11.

### **Organisation**

The year group is taught in five or six sets which are ordered by ability although all students study a common core of topics. Students in higher sets will deal with topics in greater depth and at a faster rate while students in lower sets will take more time to cover the material key to preparing for IGCSE.

### **Teaching Methods**

The main course text books are those published by CGP: Key Stage 3 book 3 with some exercises from the IGCSE textbook. The department operates in a traditional manner involving whole class teaching together with routine exercises and occasional investigational work; technology is used to engage students, deepen understanding and personalise learning. Students have access to support and extension materials via Firefly, with many extra resources for each unit. Homework is set each week and will primarily reinforce and extend work covered in class, but may also be investigational or internet and ICT linked. A balance is maintained between mental methods, written methods and the use of calculators. Numeracy and arithmetic will still be tested and encouraged in lessons to reinforce basic techniques and ideas. It is vital that students are properly equipped for lessons. Calculators are used where appropriate - an adequate calculator is necessary in all maths lessons. If buying a new calculator we recommend

the CASIO FX-83GTX, FX-85GTX or, if likely to do maths/science A-level, FX-991EX. Students are also expected to own standard geometrical instruments (ruler, protractor and pair of compasses).

### **Progression**

In Year 10 pupils will continue to study the Edexcel IGCSE maths course in order to sit it in the summer of Year 11. The IGCSE course consists of two papers, each two hours long; both papers allow the use of a calculator.

The most able students will have the opportunity to study topics in greater depth as well as being introduced to more advanced topics in Year 11. This allows them to sit the AQA Level 2 Certificate of Further Mathematics alongside IGCSE maths.

## **MUSIC**

### **Aims:**

To develop, through music:

- An interest and understanding of a range of musical experiences
- The ability to perform music and communicate to an audience as a soloist and within a group
- The ability to create and improvise original pieces of music
- Skills in the use of Music Technology software and hardware
- An understanding of how music is created and notated
- An awareness of the social, historical and cultural influences on Music

### **Teaching methods**

This course explores all three strands of music: composition, performance and listening. Pupils are taught in full class groups, in smaller groups and given tutorial time on composition projects.

Assessment is on-going throughout the course and pupils are assessed on the following:

The performance of a prepared solo piece of music and ensemble piece of music

The creation and notation of a set composition

Music and the Media project

Knowledge of musical styles from a variety of periods of history and areas of the world

General musical knowledge

### **Topics covered**

Solo and group performance skills

Composition

Music Technology: Sonar, Sibelius and other Software

How music has developed up to the present day and how it is notated and read

### **Progression**

This course leads on to the GCSE course in Music; we currently follow the AQA specification. Pupils who have not taken this option in Year 9 may still opt for the GCSE Music course in Year 10, provided they are having instrumental or singing lessons.

## **PSHEE**

Our PSHEE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) and SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) programmes, along with our shared values for Methodist education and the wider curriculum, complement and reinforce our aims to provide students with a broad knowledge and understanding of many issues. We aim to ensure that each individual develops the ability to deal with a variety of situations, moral and social dilemmas, develop skills, acquire knowledge and make informed choices and decisions so they grow into responsible citizens. We have a whole school approach to developing the qualities and attributes that pupils need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society while also encompassing a greater care for our wider world. We also allocate a lesson a week to structured PSHEE lessons.

Students will follow a series of lessons based around the three core themes recommended:

### **Health and Wellbeing**

- How to manage transition.
- How to maintain physical, mental, emotional and sexual health and wellbeing.
- About parenthood and the consequence of teenage pregnancy.
- How to manage risks and stay safe.
- How to identify and access help, advice and support.
- How to make informed choices about drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
- Administering first aid.
- The role and influence of media on lifestyle.

### **Relationships**

- How to develop and maintain a variety of health relationships within a range of social/cultural contexts including LGBTQ.
- How to recognise and manage emotions within a range of relationships.
- About the concept of consent
- About managing loss including bereavement, separation and divorce.
- How to recognise and respond to risky negative relationships including bullying and how to seek help.
- How to respect equality and diversity in relationships.

### **Living in the Wider World**

- About rights and responsibilities
- How to make informed choices and be enterprising and ambitious
- How to develop team work and leadership skills and develop flexibility and resilience
- How to manage personal finance
- How to respect specified fundamental British Values

These topics all provide opportunities for the student to grow and develop as individuals. They learn to work and discuss in groups and as a whole class unit thereby listening to other people's opinions and learning to work together.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION & GAMES**

### **Aims**

- to inspire lifelong engagement and participation in sport for all pupils – and understanding the importance of exercise and physical activity in contemporary lifestyles, irrespective of ability.
- to continue to challenge and develop experience and expertise in a number of activity areas.
- to challenge all pupils to be the best versions of themselves and strive for Regional and International success.

### **Organisation**

Pupils are timetabled in 3 x 55 minute (single) periods of PE every two weeks and a 1 x 110 minute (double) Games lesson each week

### **PE**

On a practical level PE groups are mixed ability and tend to be taught in single sex groups. In Year 9 every pupil has 2 activity lessons and 1 fitness lesson throughout the 2-week timetable. Throughout the year pupils will experience a wide range of activities which currently include but are not limited to Hockey, Handball, Volleyball, Basketball, Badminton, Swimming, Tennis and Athletics.

### **Teaching Methods**

The focus of the year 9 curriculum is to develop knowledge and understanding through a variety of activity areas. The learning outcomes change for the different activity types but include;

- Develop and refine advanced skills and techniques.
- Evaluate and improve performance levels
- Use of tactics and strategies within game situations
- Develop the use of theoretical knowledge and terminology.

There is scope here to use some ICT, with ergometers, heart rate monitors and fitness test protocols to show pupils how to maximize their performance.

### **Games**

In the Autumn term our major sports are Rugby and Netball, in the Spring term they are Netball, Rugby sevens and Football, and in the Summer term they are Athletics, Cricket and Tennis. We also offer competitive fixtures in Badminton, Basketball, Cross-Country, Hockey, Swimming, Squash, Table tennis and Triathlon throughout the year.

All activities are taught during the double 'Games afternoon' period. The whole year group is timetabled for this and pupils are put into activity groups during these lessons. For those either not in School teams, or not wanting to take part in our major games, we give an opportunity to experience a range of activities through a sports carousel. Some of these include: Badminton, Basketball, Climbing, Fitness Suite, Hockey, Swimming, Squash and Water polo.

### **Teaching Methods**

Our major sports practices take place during Games lessons, these are teacher led, pupils are challenged to continuously developed their individual and team skills, with the overall aim

to increase performances. Every lesson has a competitive element in it and pupils are continuously challenged to develop not only their fitness levels but also their tactical knowledge and understanding of the sport in preparation for competitive fixtures which take place mid-week and on weekends.

The sports carousel option has been designed to be pupil led, we challenge the pupils to develop and refine skills and techniques in a wide range of activities. It provides pupils with an opportunity to improve their fitness levels and enhance their mental wellbeing.

## **RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

### **Aims**

The Year 9 course is preparation for GCSE and the topics covered are taught in such a way as to encourage and develop the core skill of philosophical enquiry and enable pupils to think about issues in an informed manner. The aim of the subject is to address ethical and philosophical topics that are both interesting and stimulating, whilst also being related to the modern world. Pupils are then able to learn, reflect, discuss, and evaluate their own position in relation to the subject matter.

### **Organisation**

Groups are taught in forms that are of mixed ability.

### **Teaching Methods**

The department encourages the sharing of views through discussion and debate in a controlled, respectful and sensitive environment where all views are able to be expressed. Written work is important, with the Department using ICT and a variety of suitable topic-related documentary programmes in its teaching and learning on a regular basis. Prep is varied, from written work to small projects, both of which encourage research and independent learning.

### **Topics Covered**

Ethical topics studied, including medical issues such as abortion and euthanasia. Other areas of exploration include British values and attitudes to crime and punishment, prejudice, war, marriage and divorce. Philosophical issues relating to our existence also challenge the pupils' views on the important questions of evil and suffering, the Holocaust, examples of those who have made a stand against evil and suffering, the existence of God, terrorism, miracles, and the evidence for life after death.

### **Progression**

At GCSE, Religious Studies is an optional subject. Those opting for the course will be taking the AQA Religious Studies syllabus A, which was introduced in September 2016. The new syllabus contains greater emphasis on the beliefs, teachings and practices of religion. The religions chosen for study are Judaism and Christianity, although the department is considering offering Buddhism as a possible alternative to Judaism.

## **SCIENCE**

**Exam Board** Cambridge IGCSE  
**Syllabus** Co-ordinated Science/Combined Science

### **Introduction**

In September, all Year 9 pupils will start studying GCSE Science. There will be six sets divided into two half-years: within each half-year, there will be sets 1 to 3. All the sets will cover the same material until the end of Year 9, when there will be internal examinations. Set changes and the exam entries depend on the results of these exams and progress throughout the year. Year 10 sets are not in two streams: we would usually have a top set; 2 parallel second sets, and sets 3 to 5. The top four sets would be expected to do higher tier co-ordinated science exams, the fifth set foundation tier co-ordinated science and the sixth set foundation tier combined science. Science GCSEs are terminally assessed, with no resits of separate components allowed. They represent a rigorous and yet accessible course, which is assessed by examinations at the end of Year 11.

### **Aims**

Our aim is to help pupils to achieve their full potential in science, gain the highest grades possible and where appropriate prepare them for study of science at a higher level. Internal examinations at the end of Year 10 and trial exams in January of Year 11 will be used to make final decisions about tiers of exam entry. In general, the aim of the course is to:

- Develop the pupils' interest in, and enthusiasm for, science
- Encourage pupils to develop a critical approach to scientific evidence and methods
- Develop the skills necessary to become a competent experimental scientist
- Acquire scientific skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for progression and further learning
- Equip pupils to make a successful transition to studying A-level sciences.

### **Organisation**

Pupils are in the same set for all three-science subjects. Sets are arranged for the first time based on examination results of Year 8 and progress throughout the year. Sets are based on achievement across all three sciences, and are reviewed both continuously and after end of year examinations. A subject specialist teaches each of the three science subjects.

### **Teaching Methods**

One of the attractions of Cambridge IGCSE Science is that pupils are taught the theory necessary to allow meaningful experiments to be undertaken. Pupils will typically be taught as a class when theory is being covered and then work in small groups or pairs when they are carrying out practical work. The Science Faculty makes extensive use of ICT, Data loggers and interactive software to enhance teaching. Teachers use every opportunity to link the content of the course to relevant topic contexts,

### **Assessment and Support Materials**

Assessment examinations are taken at the end of Year 11. Pupils will take a multiple-choice exam, a paper comprising short and long answer questions and an 'Alternative to Practical' paper. Pupils will be issued with an excellent textbook, covering the specification in considerable depth. The

books include notes on the necessary theory, summary notes and practice questions. This book remains the property of the school and no charge is made unless the book is lost and needs to be replaced. There may be charges made for support materials such as revision guides or booklets of revision questions, which remain the property of the pupil. Firefly is also populated with a wealth of resources: past-papers, notes etc.

## **THE LEARNING SUPPORT UNIT**

In Year 9, it is possible to withdraw pupils from an agreed subject in order to attend learning support. As well as helping pupils to consolidate English lessons, with a focus on language and grammar, we also concentrate on comprehension, revision and study skills as well as other core subjects. There is also time available to spend on prep with the support of a member of staff. Existing WGS pupils may have attended learning support lessons since Year 7 or 8; pupils joining in Year 9 may appreciate the time spent strengthening basic skills before the GCSE years.

Looking ahead to Years 10 and 11, pupils choose four options in addition to English, maths and science at GCSE. Learning support can be one of those options. Time is available, not only to work on prep, but to organise and consolidate class notes as well as building up revision notes. At appropriate times throughout the year, pupils will also look at study skills, revision and exam techniques to help with exam preparation. With staff agreement, permission can be sought to go to specialist rooms, for example, art and DT. This further helps with the idea of 'keep up and catch up' that is ever present in learning support.

As well as support with subject matters, there is also time to consider future plans, post-16. Should academic A-levels not be the most appropriate option, we are able to advise pupils of local opportunities for vocational courses and apprenticeships. In short, we provide flexible support and welcome space in a busy and demanding school life.

Further details of our work can be obtained by contacting a member of the Learning Support Department.