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

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

A warm welcome from our Head of School, Elen Roberts

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

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

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

Expecting to go to university or into high-quality professional training, such as an apprenticeship, is a very important start. Both of these routes rely upon students achieving a good set of qualifications at GCSE level so that they can progress onto A-levels or other suitable Level 3 or 2 courses. English and Maths are critical subjects for their progression and it is now a legal requirement that students resit these subjects if they do not achieve a standard pass at GCSE on their first attempt.

We expect almost all of our students to follow a broad academic pathway, selecting one specialism subject of their choice from Geography, History, French, Spanish and Computer Science. It is important that students consider this option carefully with a view to future educational and career aspirations, as well as their own individual strengths.

Parental and school guidance in this process is invaluable in supporting them to make choices which will allow them to thrive and develop their passion for learning.

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**Pathways Explained**

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

**Baccalaureate Pathway**

Most students in the school will follow the Baccalaureate Pathway which includes study of the English Baccalaureate subjects. These include the core subjects of English Language and Literature, Maths, Statistics, Citizenship and Double Science, 1 Ebacc subject (from Geography, History, French, Spanish or Computer Science) plus two additional options. Students will study for 10 GCSE qualifications. The subject selection in this pathway will ensure students study the academic subjects which will best prepare them for A-Levels and hopefully university.

**Baccalaureate: 25 hours/week**
Year 9 Options – Baccalaureate Pathway

Part 1

Your Details

Part 2

Name

Part 3

Parent/Carer Name

Part 4

Parent/Carer Signature

To be returned to reception by Wednesday 13th February 2019

Please indicate your preferences by writing 1, 2, 3 and 4 next to your preferred subjects. You will be given 2 subjects from your selection. We try to meet as many first choices as possible but this is subject to student numbers and timetabling constraints.
Core Subjects (Compulsory)

English Language

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

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

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

English Literature

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

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

Core Subjects (Compulsory)

Citizenship

In Citizenship, students will develop the knowledge and skills to play a full and active role in society. Through the study of the political and legal systems in the UK, students will be empowered to effect change and make a difference.

There are 3 core themes. Life in Modern Britain looks at immigration, diversity, the media and Britain on the world stage. Rights and Responsibilities explores laws, crime and human rights. Politics and Participation examines democracy, parliament and making change. Students will also complete an active citizenship project during the course.

Mathematics

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

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

Assessment Method: 100% exam
Exam Board: AQA

Assessment Method: 100% exam
Exam Board: AQA

Assessment Method: 100% exam
Exam Board: AQA

Assessment Method: 100% exam
Exam Board: Edexcel
Core Subjects  (Compulsory)

Statistics

The GCSE (9–1) Statistics qualification incorporates numerous examples of real-life data and contexts, which build skills that students will use in other subjects, such as Science and Geography.

Based on the principles of the statistical enquiry cycle, students gain a rounded understanding of how to interpret and apply data to a number of scenarios, both across subjects and in the real world.

Offering GCSE Statistics is the natural partner for reinforcing techniques in GCSE Mathematics and supporting progression to A level.

Assessment Method: 100% exam
Exam Board: Edexcel

Combined Science

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

Biology: Cell biology, organisation of organisms, infection and response, bioenergetics, homeostasis and response, inheritance, variation and evolution, ecology

Chemistry: Atomic structure and the periodic table, bonding, structure and the properties of matter, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy changes, the rate and extent of chemical change, organic chemistry, chemical analysis, chemistry of the atmosphere, using resources

Physics: Forces, energy, waves, electricity, magnetism and electromagnetism, particle model of matter, atomic structure

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

Assessment Method: 100% exam – six exams, two in each science
Exam Board: OCR Gateway A, equivalent to two GCSEs

Ebacc Options

History

In Paper 1, students will study change over time in a thematic study which will cover medieval, early modern and modern history and a historical environment study. Paper 2, includes a British Early Modern unit which is Early Elizabethan England 1558–88 and a period study which is Superpower Relations and the Cold War.

Paper 3 focuses on a 20th century, wider world depth study which is Weimar to Nazi Germany 1918–1939.

GCSE History gives students the opportunity to use historical sources to make claims about the past. It will also require students to understand how the past has been interpreted differently and how to ask questions of sources to form a historical enquiry. It enables students to develop their ability to write analytically about the past by considering the key concepts of causation, consequence, change and continuity and significance.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar are assessed in the exam papers on specified questions.

Assessment Method: 100% exam
Exam Board: Edexcel

Geography

This course is based on a balanced framework of physical and human geography. It allows students to investigate the link between the two themes and approach and examine the battles between man-made and natural worlds.

Students will develop a range of investigative and research skills that will allow them to analyse, explain and draw conclusions about the UK, Higher and Lower Income Countries, Newly Emerging Economies and a range of natural environments across the world.

Students will develop knowledge of:
• locations, places, environments and processes
• the interactions between people and environments and investigate how places change over space and time.

In addition, they will develop and extend their competence in a range of skills including those used in fieldwork, in using maps and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) as well as researching secondary evidence.

Assessment Method: 100% exam
Exam Board: Edexcel

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

**Spanish**

Students will study the new Spanish GCSE and develop their language acquisition in the four key skills of Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing across three main themes:

1. Identity and culture
2. Local, national, international and global areas of interest

The new course has a strong focus on grammar, spontaneity and fluency. Students will undertake translation activities from English into the target language and from the target language into English.

The students will be assessed in a final exam with each of the four skills accounting for 25% of the final grade.

A successful student of MFL will regularly revise and build a personal bank of vocabulary and will practice using Spanish, applying their knowledge of grammar.

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

**French**

Students will study the new French GCSE and develop their language acquisition in the four key skills of Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing across three main themes:

1. Identity and culture
2. Local, national, international and global areas of interest

The new course has a strong focus on grammar, spontaneity and fluency. Students will undertake translation activities from English into the target language and from the target language into English.

The students will be assessed in a final exam with each of the four skills accounting for 25% of the final grade.

A successful student of MFL will regularly revise and build a personal bank of vocabulary and will practice using French, applying their knowledge of grammar.

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

**Computer Science**

Students study a range of practical skills and theoretical concepts, developing knowledge regarding the operation and functionality of computing systems, tracing and designing algorithms and cyber security threats and preventative measures.

In addition, students will develop practical programming skills in a number of languages. For the majority of the course, students will study Python as their main programming language but will gain experience in SQL, PHP and HTML.

The qualification will be assessed through 2 examinations: Paper 1 Computational Thinking and Problem Solving (40%) and Paper 2, Written assessment – Theoretical Knowledge (40%) and a non-exam assessment (replacement for controlled assessment) (20%).

**Assessment Method:** 80% exam, 20% non-exam assessment  
**Exam Board:** AQA
GCSE Options

Art & Design

Students complete two coursework projects and one exam project.

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

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

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

Assessment Method: 60% coursework, 40% exam
Exam Board: Edexcel

Drama

Learners participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of devised theatre using the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner, in response to a stimulus set by Eduqas, including a written evaluation of their work. Learners will also study two extracts from the same performance text, preparing a scripted performance of both extracts for a visiting examiner.

The written exam requires learners to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed through the study of a performance text and through responding to live theatre.

Assessment Method: 40% practical/written internally assessed coursework, 20% practical exam, 40% written exam
Exam Board: Eduqas

Music

Music is a highly practical and creative course, with 60% of the marks gained through coursework.

Throughout the course students develop their musical skills in performance, composition, listening and appraising. They develop knowledge and understanding of music and of music theory by exploring a range of styles, including classical music, rock and pop, film and world music.

Students are expected to take instrumental/vocal lessons which will prepare them to record two performances in Year 11, of which one must be part of an ensemble. Students will also compose two pieces: one in response to a brief, and one in a style of their choosing. Most students will work in our Mac suite and use Logic to finalise their compositions, but composition work is also done acoustically throughout the course.

Assessment Method: 40% listening and appraising exam; 30% performance; 30% composition
Exam Board: Eduqas

Photography

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

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

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

Assessment Method: 60% coursework, 40% exam
Exam Board: Edexcel
**GCSE Options**

**Classical Civilisation**

This course offers students the chance to study the Ancient Civilisations of the Mediterranean and Near East, mainly focussing on Rome and Greece, but also beginning to explore the culture and history of areas such as Turkey, Egypt and Syria. In this course we will be looking in-depth at areas of language, literature, history, art, and archaeology.

In Year 9 students will focus on studying the basics of the Classical Latin language whilst working on a case study on an area of Roman civilisation.

In Year 10 students will then begin their in-depth study of the Greek and Roman worlds, with two units focussing on ancient gods and mythology, and Roman city life, examined at the end of Year 11.

**Economics**

Students study TWO modules:

1. Introduction to Economics
2. National and international Economics.

The subject actively engages students in the study of Economics to develop critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds. They will apply their knowledge to contemporary issues in a range of local, national and global contexts, and understand the perspectives of a range of different stakeholders in relation to economic activity. The course also invites students to consider the moral issues that arise as a result of the impact of economic activity on the environment and economic development, as well as enabling them to gain a deeper understanding of current affairs.

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

**Design Technology: Product Design**

Students will study the modern world of product design and development. Students learn about modern materials, manufacturing methods, design skills and CAD/CAM techniques and how to apply them to their creations.

Students develop their understanding of material properties and how these can be manipulated to be used in the thousands of products we interact with every day. Through this GCSE, students can focus on Graphics, Resistant Materials, Electronics or Systems and Control with a variety of career opportunities.

Students will plan their own designs and create products through prototyping and problem solving.

This qualification is assessed through a controlled assessment of their final designed product with a plan of manufacture (50%) and a written exam (50%).

**Assessment Method:** 50% exam, 50% coursework  
**Exam Board:** AQA

**Design Technology: Food Preparation & Nutrition**

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

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

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

**Assessment Method:** 50% exam, 50% NEA – non examination assessments  
**Exam Board:** Eduqas
**GCSE Options**

**Art & Design: Textiles**

Students will be introduced to a variety of experiences exploring a range of textile media, techniques and processes, including both traditional and new technologies.

Students will also have the opportunity to explore relevant images, artefacts and resources relating to art and design from the past and present time from around the world. Students will be able to show through practical and critical activities, which demonstrate their understanding of different styles, genres and traditions.

**Areas of study**
- Fashion and/or costume
- Printed and/or dyed materials
- Domestic textiles
- Constructed and/or applied textiles
- Constructed and/or stitched and/or embellished textiles.

**Assessment Method:** 60% portfolio, 40% task

**Exam Board:** AQA

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**Business Studies**

Students will cover two units which include:

1. Investigating a small business
2. Building a business.

Each unit will have its own assessment worth 50% of their GCSE grade. Both exams will be tested at the end of Year 11.

Across these units, students develop knowledge and understanding of marketing, management, production, finance, the economy, ethics and enterprise. Students should expect to develop and apply their numeracy skills in this subject and show a keen interest in business to succeed.

**Assessment Method:** 100% exam

**Exam Board:** Edexcel

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**Sociology**

Students study two units:

**Unit 1:** The sociology of families and education

**Unit 2:** The sociology of crime and deviance and social stratification

Sociology aims to broaden students’ minds, helping them to see their world from different perspectives and in new and thought-provoking ways. Across these units, students explore social processes including socialisation, social control and social change. Students also explore social issues, including the causes and consequences of inequality, concepts of crime and deviance as well as relevant areas of social theory and methodology. The new Sociology GCSE covers broader and more challenging subject content than the previous GCSE. The qualification will be assessed through two examinations, each with a weighting of 50%.

**Assessment Method:** 60% exam, 40% practical assessment

**Exam Board:** Edexcel

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**Physical Education**

Students will receive a well-rounded introduction to the world of PE, Sport and Sport Science through the combination of physical performance and academic challenges. A large section of the content is to be taught in a practical way, allowing theory to be understood through practice. The theory content will look at a range of topic areas including anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, physical training, sport psychology, socio-cultural influences and will require a firm scientific grounding.

In the new GCSE, there is an increased emphasis on the theoretical content which is now worth 60% of the qualification assessed through examination.

**Assessment Method:** 100% exam

**Exam Board:** AQA
Vocational Options

Creative iMedia
Cambridge Nationals

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

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

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

Assessment Method: 75% portfolio, 25% exam
Exam Board: OCR (Cambridge Nationals)

Sport Studies
Cambridge National Level 2 in Sports Studies

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

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

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

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

Engineering Studies
V Cert

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

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

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

Child Development
Cambridge National Level 1/2

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

Assessment Method: 1 exam (50%) and 2 internally assessed coursework
Exam Board: OCR Cambridge National
The Options Process 2018–2019

Students must:

- Take part in all Academic Tracking activities on SEARCH Days
- Speak with your subject teachers
- Attend the Options Evening Event on 16th January with Parent/Carer
- Collect Options Form at the Options Evening Event
- Read the Options Booklet with Parent/Carer when you get home
- Attend Year 8 Parents Evening on Tuesday 12th February
- Hand-in Options form by Wednesday 13th February