

SHERBURN HIGH SCHOOL

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YEAR 8 INTO 9 OPTIONS BOOKLET 2026



Achievement for all



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January 2026

Dear students, parents and carers,

Subject choices for students starting Year 9 in September 2026

For our current Year 8 students, the decision about what to study in school has always been made for them. The exciting news is that in Year 9, students can start to make some choices about their learning for themselves! This is because we believe that young people should start to plan for their own future, paving a way for sixth form, apprenticeships, university and the world of work.

There are of course some subjects that everyone must study up until the end of Year 11. Everyone will continue to study English, Maths, Science and practical PE. Most of our students will also chose to study French or Spanish and History and/or Geography gaining GCSEs in all of these subjects.

This booklet, along with the Options website, will explain to you what subjects are on offer and how they are examined. Some subjects are traditionally academic; others are more vocational and will be more directly related to employment. All of this is designed to give students an opportunity to personalise their learning and take the pathway that most suits their aims and aspirations.

Students should obviously discuss their choices with parents, carers and the relevant teachers. There are also plenty of other people in school who can give you advice, particularly a student's form tutor and Mr Darnbrough, Head of Year 8. Mr Ralphs, Deputy Head is also available to discuss option choices.

Good luck with planning your future! We hope you find the booklet, videos on the website and other information useful but please – if in doubt speak to staff for help.

Matt Gill
Headteacher



Contents

4-5	Year 9 into 11
6	The preference form
7	Art & Design - Art, Craft and Design
8	Art & Design – Photography
9	Art & Design - Textiles
10	Business – Enterprise and Marketing
11	Computer Science
12	Design Technology – Product Design
13	Design Technology – Food Preparation & Nutrition
14	Drama
15	French
17	Geography
18	Health and Social (BTEC Level 2 Tech Award)
19	History
20	Information Technology & iMedia
21	Music
22	Religious Studies
23	Spanish
25	Sports Studies
26	Statistics
28	Subject Leaders
29	Contact Details



Year 9 to Year 11

Year 9 traditionally has been the time when preferences are made. To ensure students fulfil their potential we implement subject preferences in Year 8, so students can start studying for their GCSEs early. Key Stage 3 content is covered in the extended time given in years 7 and 8 to Maths, English, Humanities and Languages.

There are significant benefits to be gained by having early preferences:

- **It will allow students to move between courses should they request (up to the end of the Autumn Term). It allows a 'try before you buy' facility.**
- **We have planned and assessed the full national curriculum requirements of KS3 creating a breadth and depth curriculum as part of the STAR MAT.**
- **Year 9 nationally is known as the 'dip year' and by starting GCSE subjects' students will be challenged and will eradicate any lost learning**
- **It will re-ignite a passion for learning in subjects you choose and can change if this isn't the right choice.**
- **For many subjects there is now a significant increase in the amount of content students are expected to learn. This is a result of the new specifications currently being released. This will allow that content to be covered in depth at GCSE**
- **We have adjusted the time allocations for core subjects allowing us to focus on Literacy and Numeracy, the vital components of all aspects of education**

Which subjects are studied by everybody?

All students in Years 9, 10 and 11 study English, Maths, Science, Physical Education and PSHE (which includes Sex Education, Citizenship, Careers, Enterprise, ICT, Religious Education and Work-Related Learning). The PSHE curriculum is covered through the tutorial programme and assemblies throughout the year.

FAQ.

Why Choose Now for Year 9?

Choices must be made now to allow school sufficient time to plan for the courses starting in September 2026.

Can I change my mind about plans for Year 9 later?

You should consider your choices carefully and decide on your plans for September before the **deadline – Friday 13th March 2026**.

What if I change my mind with my choices after I've started the course?

If you should decide that the choice of subject isn't right for you, you will have the option to transfer onto another course should there be space available. Ideally, this should be done before the start of a new academic year. However, we are flexible and it is possible with justified reason to change up to the December of Year 9.

If you wish to change you must see Mr Ralphs immediately and provide a signed letter from parents/carers to show approval. Alternatively, parents/carers can email Mr Ralphs to request changes.

How should I choose?

- DO** choose a subject you are **good at** and **enjoy**
- DO** choose a subject that allows you a route to any further education, or prospective career pathway
- DON'T** choose a subject because your best friend is doing it. The two of you will probably finish up in different classes anyway
- DON'T** choose a subject because you like your present teacher. It is likely that you will have a different teacher next year.

What is a "non-viable" option?

If the number of students choosing a particular preference is not sufficient to make an appropriate sized group, that preference becomes non-viable and it will be withdrawn. If you are unfortunate enough to choose one of these, you will be asked to re-think. There may be instances where too many students have opted for a particular preference and the group is too large. We will endeavour to do all we can to make students choices work. If this isn't possible then students will be moved, with consultation into their reserve choice.

What do I do if I need help choosing my preferences?

You can seek help from your Form Tutor, your Head of Year and from your subject teachers. Don't forget Parents Consultation is on Wednesday 11th March, which can help you in your decision making and is an opportunity to discuss courses with subject teachers.



YEAR 8 PREFERENCES (2026)

You should choose four subjects. One from Pool A, B, C & D

Please select with a 1st choice (1), a reserve second choice (R)

Red indicates a vocational course.

POOL A		POOL B		POOL C		POOL D	
Computer Science		French		Art, Craft and Design		Food Preparation & Nutrition	
Food Preparation & Nutrition		Geography		Business Studies		Business Studies	
Geography		History		Drama		Information Technology	
History		Religious Studies		Health and Social		Music	
Product Design		Spanish		Information Technology		Photography	
				Product Design		Sports Studies	
				Textiles		Statistics	

Parents should complete this form here:

[Year 8 options 2026 Form](#)

We will then work to accommodate choices for the maximum number of students. Please note that timetabling constraints may lead to adjustments in preferences at a later stage. Any changes will be notified as soon as the need for them becomes apparent.

This form should be completed by Friday 13th March.



Art and Design: Art, Craft and Design

Mrs L Jamieson

Exam board: AQA

Why choose Art and Design- Art, Craft and Design?

Art, Craft and Design is a popular course that allows students to build upon and broaden the skills learnt at KS3.

Students will actively engage in the creative process of art, craft and design in order to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds.

How will your work be assessed?

Component 1 – Portfolio: extended project and additional pieces 60%

Component – Externally Set Assignment 40%

All work is internally assessed and then externally moderated.

Component 1 - Students will produce a portfolio of work exploring different areas of Art, Craft and Design such as: painting, drawing, photography and 3D making. Students will work practically to develop new and existing skills. They will become confident in taking risks and learn from experience when exploring and experimenting with ideas, processes, media, materials and techniques. In addition to traditional media, students will also learn how to use computer software such as Photoshop to support their making process. They will develop their ability to communicate their opinions and interpretations verbally and through critical and analytical writing in relation to art from a range of historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures. Students will be expected to review their work as it progresses and evaluate personal progress and outcomes.

Component 2 – This is the externally set assignment (exam) which is the culmination of the GCSE course. The exam board releases a broad range of themes in January of the final year of the GCSE course. Students have a preparatory period to produce a sketchbook of work in response to their chosen theme in line with the assessment objectives. Students are given 10 hours of controlled assessment to produce a visual response to their theme. Students will enter the exam with their sketchbooks as guidance and will use this time to create the outcome they planned during the preparatory period.

As this subject is 100% coursework, students are expected to work to strict deadlines and complete independent study out of lesson time. Projects are thematic and preparatory work is developed in sketchbooks. Students will be required to purchase sketchbooks, and encouraged to purchase art packs of equipment to enable independent learning outside of lesson.

Am I suitable for this course?

Do you enjoy art? Do you want to learn more about Art, Craft and Design including: drawing, painting, textiles, ceramics and photography? Are you creative and inquisitive and enjoy a more practical style of lesson? Do you like working independently and communicating your ideas visually? This course is for you! We welcome all students that demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to the subject.

Next steps / Transferable skills

A qualification in Art and Design could lead to work or next steps in the following sectors: A Level Art and Design, a degree, apprenticeship, or career in: Fine Art, Illustration, Graphic Design, Animation, Game Design, Advertising, Web Design, Media, Film, Television, Fashion Design, Art Teaching, Art Therapy, Surface Pattern Design, Product Design, Architecture, Interior Design.

There are many transferable skills that this course will help you to build: creativity, confidence, resilience, problem solving, organisation, time management, critical thinking, analysis, contextual interpretation, intellectual interest and curiosity, reasoning/argumentation, dedication, initiative, accountability, collaboration, self-regulation, self-evaluation, communication skills- in particular how to express concepts and feelings, empathy, tolerance and understanding of other cultures and societies.



Art and Design: Photography

Mrs L Jamieson

Exam board: AQA

Why choose Photography?

Photography is an exciting addition to the curriculum and allows you to explore the world around you, creatively using digital media and photographic image making. It will develop your questioning skills and analytical skills to communicate your ideas in creative ways.

How will you be assessed?

Component 1 – Personal Portfolio 60%

Component 2 – Externally assessed assignment 40%

All work is internally assessed and then externally moderated.

Component 1: Students will produce a portfolio of work exploring digital photography and photography genres. Students will develop knowledge about digital photography and digital image processing. Work will explore viewpoint, composition, focus, shutter speed and exposure. Students will explore digital manipulation using Photoshop software. They will develop analytical thinking when looking at the work of other artists and photographers and develop written annotation skills. Students will be expected to review their work as it progresses and evaluate personal progress and outcomes. Students are expected to work to strict deadlines and complete independent study out of lesson time. Projects are thematic and are delivered as 'Learning Pods', with work produced on digital PowerPoint sketchbooks. Students will be encouraged to use creative approaches which go beyond observation and recording and develop into personal enquiry which convey messages and visual language.

Component 2: This is the Externally Set Assignment (exam) which is the culmination of the GCSE course. The exam board releases a broad range of themes in the final year of the GCSE course. Students have a preparatory period to produce a project of work in response to the theme in line with the Assessment Objectives. Students are given 10 hours of controlled assessment to produce a visual response to the theme.

Am I suitable for this course?

Do you enjoy art and design or are you interested in digital media and editing? Are you creative and inquisitive and enjoy a more practical style of lesson? This course is for you! We welcome all students that demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to the subject.

Students would benefit from having access to their own camera for the course- for many students, a camera phone is sufficient. A voluntary contribution may be requested to support the printing and photographic sundries costs.

Next steps / Transferable skills

A qualification in Photography could lead to work or further education in the following sectors: Graphic Design, Animation, Game Design, Advertising, Web Design, Media, Film, Television, Fashion, Freelance Photography, and Fashion Photography.

There are many transferable skills that this course will help you to build: creativity, confidence, resilience, problem solving, organisation, time management, critical thinking, analysis, contextual interpretation, intellectual interest and curiosity, reasoning/argumentation, dedication, initiative, accountability, collaboration, self-regulation, self-evaluation, communication skills- in particular how to express concepts and feelings, empathy, tolerance and understanding of other cultures and societies.



Art and Design - Textiles

Mrs L Jamieson

Exam board: AQA

Why choose Art and Design- Art Textiles?

Art Textiles is a popular course that allows students to build upon and broaden the skills learnt at KS3. Students will actively engage in the creative process of art, craft and design in order to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds.

How will your work be assessed?

Component 1 – Portfolio: extended project and additional pieces 60%

Component 2 - Externally Set Assignment -40%

All work is internally assessed and then externally moderated.

Component 1: - Students will produce a portfolio of work exploring Art Textiles. They will experiment with manipulating materials using dye, print, stitch and embellishments. Drawing is an essential skill in the development process of Art Textiles. Students will develop analytical skills through exploring the work of other artists and designers, as well as their own work as it progresses.

Component 2: - Unit 2: The externally set assignment (exam) is the culmination of the GCSE course, and is set by the exam board through a choice of different themes. Students have a substantial preparatory period to produce a body of work in response to their chosen theme in line with the assessment objectives. Students are given 10 hours of controlled assessment to produce a visual response and final outcome to their theme.

As this subject is 100% coursework, students are expected to work to strict deadlines and complete independent study out of lesson time. Projects are thematic and preparatory work is developed in sketchbooks. Students will be required to purchase sketchbooks, and encouraged to purchase art packs of equipment to enable independent learning outside of lesson.

Am I suitable for this course?

Do you enjoy textiles, crafting, making and drawing? Are you creative and inquisitive and enjoy a more practical style of lesson? Then this course is for you! We welcome all students that demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to the subject.

Next steps / Transferable skills

A qualification in Art Textiles could lead to work or further education in the following sectors: Fashion Design, Costume Design, Fashion Illustration, Graphic Design, Media, Film, Television, Surface Pattern Design, Product Design, Interior Design, Soft Furnishings. The Fashion industry employs nearly a million people across in hundreds of roles, which provides diverse opportunities for young people. There are 35,000 craft makers in the UK, and as well as making their own work, they contribute to many businesses and industries, including film, theatre, dance, fashion and product design. There are many transferable skills that this course will help you to build: creativity, confidence, resilience, problem solving, organisation, time management, critical thinking, analysis, contextual interpretation, intellectual interest and curiosity, reasoning/argumentation, dedication, initiative, accountability, collaboration, self-regulation, self-evaluation, communication skills- in particular how to express concepts and feelings, empathy, tolerance and understanding of other cultures and societies.



Business – Enterprise and Marketing

Mrs V Taylor

OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Enterprise and Marketing

Why choose Business?

This qualification is for students who wish to develop applied knowledge and practical skills in enterprise and marketing. This includes being able to work collaboratively and creatively, solve problems and have awareness of businesses and customers. The OCR Cambridge Nationals Enterprise and Marketing qualification is equal in status and value to GCSE but the main advantage is in the assessment pattern. It takes an engaging, practical and inspiring approach to learning and assessment which has an exam worth 50%, with the remainder being assessed through two coursework projects.

What will I study?

Unit 1 - The first unit underpins the other learning in this qualification. Students will learn about the techniques businesses use to understand their market and develop products, investigate what makes a product viable and understand how businesses attract and retain customers. They will also learn about key aspects of small businesses, including ownership and functional activities.

Unit 2 - In unit 2, students are provided with a business challenge. From this they will create a researched and costed business proposal. Students will need to undertake activities such as conducting market research, presenting data, using idea generation tools, seeking and acting on feedback, and costing proposals.

Unit 3 - Students will prepare for and pitch their own business proposal that they developed in unit 2. Alongside developing a brand identity, students will investigate how to best promote their product and then plan and prepare their pitch. After delivering their practice and professional pitch they will review their own performance and business proposal.

Assessment

Unit 1- externally examined paper worth 40%

Unit 2 and Unit 3 – Internally assessed coursework projects worth 30% each.

Grading

Level 2 Distinction* – Level 1 Pass

Progression

Successful completion of this course allows progression to either A-Level Business or any level 3 technical Business qualification.



Computer Science

Mrs V Taylor

OCR GCSE Computer science J276

OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Computer Science will encourage learners to:

- Understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation
- Think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- Understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems
- Understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society
- Apply mathematical skills relevant to Computer Science

This is a single award GCSE and will cover topics including:

Content of Computer systems

- 1.1 Systems architecture
- 1.2 Memory
- 1.3 Storage
- 1.4 Wired and wireless networks
- 1.5 Network topologies, protocols and layers
- 1.6 System security
- 1.7 Systems software
- 1.8 Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns

Content of Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

- 2.1 Algorithms
- 2.2 Programming techniques
- 2.3 Producing robust programs
- 2.4 Computational logic
- 2.5 Translators and facilities of languages
- 2.6 Data representation

Content for the Programming Project

The Programming Project provides an opportunity for learners to demonstrate their practical ability.

Am I suitable for GCSE Computer Science?

This qualification is designed for learners who have an interest in programming, computational thinking and algorithms. It will rely heavily on difficult and **complex mathematical reasoning** and problem solving so students should be confident in maths and ideally in set 1 or 2.

Assessment Procedure

The course is assessed through 2 written exams:

Computer systems- 80 marks -1 hour and 30 minutes

Computational thinking, algorithms and programming- 80 marks- 1 hour and 30 minutes



DT – Product Design

Mrs L Jamieson

Exam Board: AQA

Why choose GCSE Design and Technology: Product Design?

GCSE Design and Technology is an inspiring, rigorous course. Using creativity and imagination, students design and make products that solve real and relevant problems within a variety of contexts. Design and Technology develops students' interdisciplinary skills and their capacity for imaginative, innovative thinking, creativity, and independence. This subject gives students the opportunity to **apply** Maths and science knowledge.

What will I study and how will I learn?

You will follow a structured sequence of design activities, including modelling and have the opportunity to extend your key skills in graphic communication and manufacturing processes. You will also have the opportunity to work with a live client when designing. You will develop your own product and manage your own project with controlled supervision. The exam board change their design challenges year on year, and you will have to respond creatively to a given brief. The main materials you will use will be woods, metals and plastics. You will explore Computer Aided Design (CAD), Computer Aided Manufacture (CAM) and have access to a Laser Cutter.

You will learn this by;

Researching existing products, materials and manufacture.

Enhancing design skills

Problem solving

Communicating with a 'live' client

Carrying out relevant research

Creating a concise and detailed portfolio

Producing a 3D product

What skills do I need to be successful?

You will need to be organised, able to plan your work, be willing to contact a target market, and have an interest in product or industrial design. You will also need to be willing to work on a concise and detailed portfolio, gather research and experiment and test techniques using the school facilities.

How will it be assessed?

50% Written Exam – Based on technical, design and make principles in Design and Technology. The exam consists of 15% maths - in a Design and Technology context.

50% Non-Examination Assessment- Which is a design and make task This can be a written or electronic portfolio. Must include photographic evidence of practical outcome. You will have opportunity to generate your own brief from a given context to base your design and make task on.

Possible Contexts

- High profile event or occasion
- Inclusive/adjustable products to suit a range of users
- Product maintenance
- Outdoor living/entertainment
- Outdoor learning
- Compact travel
- Sports equipment transport/storage
- Educational product

Career Pathways

A qualification in Design and technology could lead to work or further education in the following sectors: Graphic Design, Animation, Game Design, Advertising, Fashion Design, Architecture, Interior Design, Furniture Design, Industrial Design, Product Design, Engineering, Civil Engineering, Mechanics, Material engineering, Silver Smith, Carpenter, Construction Worker, Set Designer, Model Maker, Design and Technology Teacher.



DT – Food Preparation & Nutrition

Mrs L Jamieson

Exam Board: AQA

Why choose GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition?

This GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical skills, along with an experimental approach to understanding the nutritional and functional properties of food.

What will I study and how will I learn?

Initially you will learn a wide range of culinary skills including dough-making, reduction and filleting. You will also learn how the sensory presentation of food is essential in preparing restaurant style dishes, using recipes chosen from British and international cuisine. You will explore current trends that influence food choice including food provenance, sustainability and the impact of food and food security on local and global markets and communities.

You will learn this by;

Working on projects
Problem solving
Carrying out research
Developing a full range of practical food preparation skills

What skills do I need to be successful?

You will need to have a genuine interest in food and food preparation; be self-motivated with an ability to work independently; manage time and resources effectively; have a keen interest in the science of food and nutrition.

How will it be assessed?

50% =Written Exam - Based on theoretical knowledge

50% = 2 x non-examined assessment (NEA)

1. A **food investigation** testing your understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. **15%**
2. A **food preparation** task where you will demonstrate your knowledge, skills and understanding of food through planning, preparing, cooking and presenting 3 dishes. (3 hours) **35%**

Career Pathways

The course offers a variety of opportunities within food preparation and nutrition industry. Some of these careers include: becoming a Chef, Food Writer, Retail Industry, Hospitality and Catering Industry, Restaurant Work, Food Critic, Nutritionist, Health worker and TV Cook.



Drama

Mr A Ashley

Examining board/syllabus

AQA

Exam Specification GCSE Drama AQA 8261

Drama is a dynamic practice that introduces students to a world of wonder and play. It encourages them to continue questioning, exploring and teasing out new ideas and ways of living and thinking. Students learn to collaborate with others, think analytically and evaluate effectively. They gain the confidence to pursue their own ideas, reflect and refine their efforts. Whatever the future holds, students of GCSE Drama emerge with a toolkit of transferable skills, applicable both in further studies and in the workplace.

Why choose Drama?

Students who chose to study GCSE Drama will build on their self-esteem and learn to become confident performers. They will learn how to become resilient and develop skills such as listening, negotiating and empathy for others by knowing how to communicate effectively. GCSE Drama students usually build on relationships with peers which often leads to long lasting friendships. The subject will expand their cultural awareness as we tour through a rich history of theatrical traditions and gain opportunities to go to see live theatre. Students also gain knowledge about specific job roles, types of theatre and stage production and design. Drama is a practical and fun subject and students will learn to become thoughtful and attentive performers by analysing and evaluating performance work in detail, both verbally and in written work. It will allow students to develop highly valuable skills which they will continue to use throughout their life, both in and out of work.

What will I study?

Component 1: Understanding drama

Students will explore their knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre and study one set play from a choice of 6. After watching a variety of live theatre and performances, students will analyse and evaluate the work of live theatre makers in an open book written exam of 1 hour and 45 minutes. This is worth 40% of the total GCSE and is externally marked by AQA.

Component 2: Devising drama (practical)

Students will go through the process of creating and performing their own piece of devised drama. Students may contribute as performer or designer and they will analyse and evaluate their own work in a devising log. This is worth 40% of the total GCSE and is marked by teachers and moderated by AQA.

Component 3: Texts in practice (practical)

Students will perform two extracts from one play and may contribute as performer or designer. There is a free choice of play for students but it must contrast with the set play chosen for Component 1. This is worth 20% of the total GCSE and is marked by AQA.

What grades could I achieve?

Drama is worth one GCSE grade 9 - 1

What careers could it lead to?

There are a variety of careers which the skills gained from GCSE Drama can lead you to, some of these include: actor/actress; stage manager; arts administrator; drama teacher; drama therapist; television production assistant; radio presenter; theatre director. However, there are also a number of careers which are not specific to the Performing Arts sector which studying GCSE Drama could be beneficial for; law, journalism, marketing, teaching, medicine, armed forces, private business sector.



French

Mrs H Kibble

Exam board: AQA

Why choose to study French?

The GCSE course in French has been designed to develop your linguistic skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) and your cultural awareness of French speaking countries. Throughout the three-year course, you will be encouraged to communicate in French and to express your own opinions about issues. You will also be asked to show some understanding of other people's written or spoken experiences and views. By doing so, you will develop valuable transferable skills such as communication, problem solving, adaptability and collaboration and gain a lifelong skill in itself.

How will your work be assessed?

Paper	Component	What is assessed?	How is it assessed?	Questions/content
1	Listening 25% of GCSE	Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language.	Foundation: 35 minutes (40 marks) Higher: 45 minutes (50 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section A – listening comprehension questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally Section B – dictation where students transcribe short sentences, including a small number of words from outside the prescribed vocabulary list
2	Speaking 25% of GCSE	Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes.	Foundation: 7-9 minutes (60 marks) Higher: 10-12 minutes (60 marks) Plus 12 minutes of preparation time	Role-play – 15 marks (2 minutes) Photo card – 15 marks (2 min. F / 2 min. H) Reading aloud task & general conversation – 30 marks (3-5 minutes Foundation / 5-7 minutes Higher)
3	Reading 25% of GCSE	Understanding and responding to different types of written language	Foundation: 45 minutes (60 marks) Higher: 60 minutes (60 marks)	A – questions and answers in English B – questions and answers in French C – translation from French into English Examples: True and false / multiple choice / single word answers / short answers / Positive, negative or both / Past, Now or Future
4	Writing 25% of GCSE	Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes	Foundation: 60 minutes (50 marks) Higher: 75 minutes (60 marks)	Foundation F - write 4 sentences to describe a picture F - translating 5 sentences from English into F - a short grammar task F - 40 words writing task F & H - 90 words writing task H – 150 words writing task H – translating a full paragraph from English into French.

GCSE French has a Foundation Tier (F) (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (H) (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series. Assessment is based on four skills; reading, writing, speaking and listening. The table below shows how much each assessment of the skills is worth towards the final grade and what the assessment will involve.

What topics will I study?

The specification covers three distinct themes. These themes apply to all four question papers. Students are expected to understand and provide information and opinions about these themes relating to their own experiences and those of other people, including people in countries/ communities where French is spoken. The table below shows the topics which are studied under each theme.

Theme	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4
1: Identity and culture	Me, my family and friends: Relationships with family and friends. Marriage/partnership	Technology in everyday life: Social media Mobile technology	Free-time activities Music Cinema and TV Food and eating out Sport	Customs and festivals in French-speaking countries/communities
2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest	Home, town, neighbourhood and region	Social issues: Charity/voluntary work Healthy/unhealthy living	Global issues: The environment Poverty/homelessness	N/a
3: Current and future study and employment	My studies	Life at school/college	Education post-16	Jobs, career choices and ambitions

Progression Opportunities

Being the official language of 29 countries across the globe, French is a key player on the world stage. Not only is it one of the official working languages in dozens of international organisations, including the United Nations, the International Olympic Committee, the EU, the WTO and the International Red Cross but it is also the lingua franca of culture, including art, cuisine, dance and fashion. France has won more Nobel Prizes for literature than any other country in the world and is one of the top producers of international films. For the UK to maintain and strengthen its position in the global economy, linguists are vital. In the majority, linguists work in the sectors of Marketing, PR, Business, Sales, HR, Law and Finance (source: HECSU 2018) and are proven to earn more than their monolingual counterparts.

Finally, the study of French will also provide you with a springboard to learn related languages such as Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Latin (a key language for medical terminology).

Some universities favour a GCSE qualification in a Modern Foreign Language as part of their entry requirements for particular courses.



Geography

Mrs J Goulding

Examining Board/Syllabus: AQA

Paper 1 – Living with the Physical Environment

This unit is concerned with the dynamic nature of physical processes and systems, and human interaction with them. It aims to develop an understanding of the tectonic, geomorphological, biological and meteorological processes and features in different environments, and the need for management strategies and consideration of the direct and indirect effects of human interaction.

Section A: Challenge of Natural Hazards - Tectonic Hazards, Extreme Weather, Tropical Storms, Climate Change

Section B: The Living World – Ecosystems, Hot Deserts, Tropical Rainforests

Section C: Physical Landscapes in the UK – UK Physical Landscapes, Rivers, Coasts

Paper 2 – Challenges in the Human Environment

This unit is concerned with human processes, systems and outcomes. They are studied in a variety of places and at a range of scales and levels of development. The aims of this unit are to develop an understanding of the factors that produce a diverse variety of human environments; the dynamic nature of these environments that change over time and place; the need for sustainable management; and the areas of current and future challenge and opportunity for these environments.

Section A: Urban Issues and Challenges

Section B: Changing Economic World

Section C: Resource Management

Paper 3 – Geographical Applications

The Geographical applications unit is designed to be synoptic in that students will be required to draw together knowledge, understanding and skills from the full course of study. It is an opportunity for students to show their breadth of understanding and an evaluative appreciation of the interrelationships between different aspects of geographical study. This unit involves two fieldtrips (physical and human) and study of a pre-release booklet for an issue evaluation.

Section A: Issue Evaluation

Section B: Fieldwork

Assessment Procedures

The course will be examined through 3 exams at the end of Year 11

Paper 1 35% of GCSE 1hr 30min exam

Paper 2 35% of GCSE 1hr 30min exam

Paper 3 30% of GCSE 1hr 30min exam



Health and Social Care - BTEC Level 2 Tech Award

Miss C Dodd

The BTEC Tech Award in Health and Social Care has been designed to provide students with a broad understanding of working practices used within the caring profession.

This course has the equivalent value of one GCSE and is graded at Pass (4), Merit (6) and Distinction (8).

It will be of benefit to anyone considering a career in caring, e.g., working with children, the elderly, social work or nursing.

Course Structure

The course consists of 3 units completed over 3 years. All units except Component 3, which is an exam, are internally assessed and externally verified by a moderator.

Unit Title	Content
Component 1: Internal Assessment 30% of Total overall grade Human Lifespan Development	In this component, you will study how people grow and develop over the course of their life, from infancy to old age, this includes physical, intellectual, emotional and social development, and the different factors that may affect them. An individual's development can be affected by major life events, such as marriage, parenthood or moving to a new house and you will learn about how people adapt to these changes, as well as the types and sources of support that can help them.
Component 2: Internal assessment 30% of Total overall grade Health and Social Care Services and Values	Providing good health and social care services is very important and a set of 'care values' exists to ensure that this happens. Care values are important because they enable people who use health and social care services to get the care they need and to be protected from different sorts of harm. This component will give you an understanding of health and social care services and will help you develop skills in applying care values that are common across the sector (some of which are transferable to other sectors that involve interactions with clients or customers).
Component 3: External Exam 40% of Total overall grade Health and Wellbeing	In this component, you look at the factors that can have a positive or negative influence on a person's health and wellbeing. You will learn to interpret physiological and lifestyle indicators, and what they mean for someone's state of health. You will learn how to use this information to design an appropriate plan for improving someone's health and wellbeing, including short- and long-term targets. Additionally, you will explore the difficulties an individual may face when trying to make these changes.



History

Ms N Kesterton

Examination Board/Syllabus: OCR (Schools History Project B)

Aims

- to develop the historical knowledge, understanding and skills gained at Key Stage 3.
- to develop your ability to examine, analyse and evaluate evidence; to ask questions, research and improve your independent thinking skills.
- to develop an understanding and interest in politics, the world and current affairs.
- to prepare you for AS and A level History.

This course will help you understand how the world you live in has been shaped by historical events. It will develop your understanding of the diversity of human experience across history as well as developing your depth of knowledge and understanding of a wide range of interesting and fascinating periods, societies and aspects of history. It will also develop and refine your skills, such as source analysis and evaluation, understanding and breaking down interpretations of the past, independent enquiry and developing arguments supported by evidence.

Finally, it will be a course that you will enjoy!

The People's Health, c.1250 to present Thematic Study 20% of total GCSE	The Norman Conquest 1065-1087 British Depth Study 20% of total GCSE	Site Study: Temple Newsam History Around Us 20% of total GCSE	The Making of America 1789-1900 Period Study 20% of total GCSE	Living under Nazi Rule, 1933-1945 World Depth Study 20% of total GCSE
<p>An investigation of the cultural, social and economic changes in Britain from the Middle Ages, through the Early Modern period, the Industrial Revolution and Modern Britain.</p> <p>Case studies of the Black Death and subsequent plagues, Cholera, Spanish Influenza and Aids.</p> <p>Analysis of the changing living conditions, lifestyles and population and the impact of Government approaches to Public Health on people and places. Gaining an understanding of the diverse nature of Britain's past and changes and continuities within it.</p>	<p>An investigation of the upheaval caused by the Norman invasion in 1066, considering Anglo-Saxon England before this turning point and the study of the political, military, religious, economic, social and cultural impact of Norman rule to 1087.</p> <p>Case studies of the Battle of Hastings, the Harrying of the North and other rebellions as well as the diverse experience of religious and cultural shifts under the 'Norman Yoke'.</p> <p>Analysis of interpretations of this time period and how and why these have been constructed, from children's books to historians to popular film.</p>	<p>We will visit Temple Newsam on a trip as part of a case study of the house and its changing purpose since the initial house was built in c.1500, from drama connecting to Mary Queen of Scots, to the First World War, to tourism and art.</p> <p>Analysis of how Temple Newsam House compares to similar sites and why it developed in the way it did.</p> <p>Investigation of what Temple Newsam House reveals about local and national trends in history as well as how the current building and uses of the site inform historical interpretations.</p>	<p>An investigation of the expansion of America and the struggles and upheavals that facilitated this from the treatment of indigenous people to the rise and fall of slavery whilst a modern United States was born.</p> <p>Case study of the nature and impact of the Gold Rushes of the 1840s and 1850s as well as the experiences of Native Americans throughout the century.</p> <p>Analysis of the Civil War and the impact of Reconstruction on black Americans, the political and social implications of this for indigenous people and the cultural changes to ways of life as America expanded into the 20th Century.</p>	<p>An investigation of the creation of the Nazi state and the impact of dictatorship on Germany and Europe. Case studies of the cultural and social impact on diverse groups of people of control methods as well as the levels of opposition to the Nazis.</p> <p>Careful consideration of the political, military, religious, economic, social and cultural forces at work at this time with sensitive attention paid to the persecution of Jews and other minorities under Nazi rule.</p> <p>Investigation of Germany at war and the impact on the people as well as the events and nature of the Holocaust and resistance to this. Analysis of contemporary sources and later interpretations to further shed light on this dark time in world history.</p>
<p>Paper 1: Thematic and British Depth Studies. 1 hour 45mins</p>		<p>Paper 2: History Around Us 1 hour.</p>	<p>Paper 3: Period and World Depth Studies. 1 hour 45min</p>	

Assessment

100% of the assessment for History will be through examinations taken at the end of Year 11.



Information Technology – Creative iMedia

Mrs V Taylor

OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge Nationals Creative iMedia

This is a single award GCSE equivalent and will cover topics including:

Unit 1: Creative iMedia in the media industry

Planning is an essential part of working in the creative and digital media sector. This unit will enable students to understand pre-production skills and techniques used in the sector, as well as gain the knowledge and skills to create digital media products and explore their application.

Content includes:

- Understanding the purpose and plan the content of pre-production
- Being able to produce and review pre-production documents

Unit 2: Visual identity and digital graphics

Digital graphics feature in many areas of our lives, and play a very important part in today's world. The aim of this unit is for students to understand the basics of digital graphics editing for the creative and digital media sector.

Content includes:

- Understanding the purpose and properties of digital graphics and knowing where and how they are used
- Being able to plan the creation of a digital graphic
- Having the knowledge to create new digital graphics, using a range of editing techniques

Unit 3: Interactive digital media

Interactive multimedia products are featured widely in everyday life and in the creative and digital media sector. They are used in computer games, mobile phone applications, presentations and many other areas.

Content includes:

- Understanding the purposes, uses and properties of interactive multimedia products
- Being able to plan and create interactive multimedia products to a client's requirements
- Being able to review interactive multimedia products, identifying areas for improvement

Cambridge Nationals in Creative Media will equip students with sound ICT skills for everyday use and provide opportunities to develop in context those desirable, transferable skills such as planning, research and analysis, working with others or communicating using technology.

The coursework element allows for practical, hands-on development of software skills to provide creative solutions to real problems.

Assessment Procedure

The course is assessed in two ways.

60% coursework – 2 exam boards set assignments assessed by the teacher and moderated by the exam board.

40% Examination – 1 unit is assessed by an exam.



Music

Mr A Ashley

GCSE Music AQA 8271

GCSE Music is a very varied and exciting option to take. You will study a wide range of activities including performing, composing and learning about different styles of music. If you enjoy playing an instrument or singing, creating your own music and listening to a wide variety of music, then **GCSE Music is the right choice for you.**

Why Choose Music GCSE?

GCSE Music provides a solid foundation for A level Music and is an excellent entrance subject for university because admissions tutors look for well rounded, confident and culturally aware students. The music and entertainment industry are big business in the UK and GCSE Music could pave the way to any career within the industry. These might include artist management, accountancy, copyright law, events management, journalism, performer, publisher, sound engineer, teacher, TV/radio presenter. Students who study GCSE Music will find plenty of options when it comes to choosing a future path. Equipped with an awareness of musical genres and styles; performing, listening and composing skills and music technology proficiency, students will be well equipped to pursue a musical profession.

Music students also develop many transferable skills that are desirable by any employer: literacy, critical thinking, social skills and team working, confidence, problem solving, numeracy and ICT, leadership and communication, and time management and organisational skills. Perhaps most importantly Music is a skill for life and provides opportunity for enjoyment, leisure, participation and social interaction.

What will I study?

The GCSE Music course is designed to allow the study of Music through the integration of **performing, composing, listening and appraising** with opportunities to use music technology. It recognises that we live in an age of cultural diversity and covers a wide range of music: **classical music, world music, and popular music.**

The music studied is drawn from four Areas of Study: -

AoS 1 - Western Classical Tradition 1650-1910

AoS 2 - Popular Music

AoS 3 - Traditional Music

AoS 4 - Western Classical Tradition Since 1910

You are also required to study set pieces:

Beethoven: *Symphony No.1, Movement 1:*

Adagio molto – Allegro con brio

3 songs by Queen:

Bohemian Rhapsody

Seven Seas of Rhye

Love of my Life

Assessment:

Unit 1: **Understanding Music** – Examination (40%) (1 hour and 30 minutes) Listening and written

Unit 2: **Performing Music** - Solo and Ensemble (30%) (Coursework)

Unit 3: **Composition** - One free composition and one to a set brief (30%) (Coursework)

For further information please see Miss Connell.



Religious Studies

Mr A Easton

Examining board/syllabus

AQA

Why choose Religious Studies?

Interested in a career to do with law, social care or psychology? Enjoy learning about the world around us and debating controversial topics such as terrorism, animal testing, abortion and the death penalty?

RE GCSE not only allows you to learn and understand religious views in Christianity and Islam but also covers a huge range of ethical themes to explore. You will be challenged with questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth, enabling you to develop your own attitudes towards religious issues, philosophical and ethical issues. You will also gain an appreciation of how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of our culture. You will develop analytical and critical thinking skills, the ability to work with abstract ideas, leadership and research skills. All these skills will help prepare you for further study or a valuable career in many different social sectors.

Assessment

The course is split into two separate units.

Unit 1

Students study the beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and Islam. They must understand the influence of these religions on individuals, communities and societies. They must also be aware of the key moral principles of each religion including justice, the sanctity of life, healing the world, charity and kindness to others.

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 96 marks, plus 6 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG)
- 50% of GCSE

Unit 2

Students study 4 religious philosophical and ethical themes chosen from the list below.

Relationships and families:

This module covers sex, marriage and divorce as well as the nature, purpose and contemporary issues facing families.

Religion and life

In this unit students study the origins of the universe, the environment, animal rights, and the value of life through the topics of abortion and euthanasia.

Religion, peace and conflict

This theme looks at war, terrorism, peace, weapons of mass destruction and pacifism.

Religion, crime and punishment

Here students study different types and causes of crime. Why do we punish people, forgiveness and the treatment of criminals?

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 96 marks, plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG)
- 50% of GCSE



Spanish

Mrs V Scott

Exam board: AQA

Why choose to study Spanish?

We are delighted to now offer GCSE Spanish to our students. Spoken in over 21 countries, Spanish is the third most widely spoken language worldwide. This course will enable students to manipulate and use Spanish effectively, independently and creatively through culturally engaging content. Students will aim to develop their communication skills and be encouraged to express themselves spontaneously and fluently in the target language.

How will your work be assessed?

GCSE Spanish has a Foundation Tier (F) (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (H) (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series. Assessment is based on four skills; reading, writing, speaking and listening. The table below shows how much each assessment of the skills is worth towards the final grade and what the assessment will involve.

Paper	Component	What is assessed	How is assessed	Questions
1	Listening 25% of GCSE	Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language. Dictation of short, spoken extracts.	Foundation: 35 minutes (40 marks) Higher: 45 minutes (50 marks)	A – questions and answers in English B – dictation where students transcribe short sentences.
2	Speaking 25% of GCSE	Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes.	Foundation: 7-9 minutes (50 marks) Higher: 10-12 minutes (50 marks) Plus 15 minutes of preparation time	Role-play – 10 marks (1-1.5 minutes) Reading aloud task - 15 marks (2-2.5 mins. F / 3-3.5 mins.H) Photo card discussion – 25 marks (4-5 mins. F / 6-7 mins. H)
3	Reading 25% of GCSE	Understanding and responding to different types of written language.	Foundation: 45 minutes (50 marks) Higher: 60 minutes (50 marks)	A – questions and answers in English B - translation from Spanish into English
4	Writing 25% of GCSE	Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes	Foundation: 70 minutes (50 marks) Higher: 75 minutes (50 marks)	F - write 4 sentences to describe a picture F - 50 words writing task F- Short grammar tasks F & H - translation from English into Spanish F & H - 90 words writing task H – 150 words writing task

What topics will I study?

The specification covers three distinct themes. These themes apply to all four question papers. Students are expected to understand and provide information and opinions about these themes relating to their own experiences and those of other people, including people in countries/ communities where Spanish is spoken. The table below shows the topics which are studied under each theme.

Theme	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3
1: People and lifestyle	Identity and relationships with others	Healthy living and lifestyle	Education and work
2: Popular culture	Free-time activities	Customs, festivals and celebrations	Celebrity culture
3: Communication and the world around us	Travel and tourism, including places of interest	Media and technology	The environment and where people live

Progression Opportunities

For the UK to maintain and strengthen its position in the global economy, linguists are vital. In the majority, linguists work in the sectors of Marketing, PR, Business, Sales, HR, Law and Finance (source: HECSU 2018) and are proven to earn more than their monolingual counterparts. Finally, the study of Spanish will also provide you with a springboard to learn related languages such as Italian, Portuguese, French and Latin (a key language for medical terminology).

Some universities favour a GCSE qualification in a Modern Foreign Language as part of their entry requirement for particular courses.



Sports Studies

Mr L Stubbins

OCR Cambridge National Sports Studies

The Cambridge National in Sport Studies takes a more sector-based focus, whilst also encompassing some core sport/physical education themes. As part of their mandatory units, students have the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge about different types of sport and physical activity, skill development and sports leadership to their own practical performance. They will also learn about contemporary issues in sport such as participation levels and barriers, promoting values and behaviour in sport, hosting major sporting events, the role of National Governing Bodies (NGB's) and the use of technology in sport.

In this course students must complete three units:

- One mandatory externally assessed unit (exam) - 1 hour 15 minutes (40%)
- One mandatory centre-assessed unit (NEA) - Practical and Coursework based (40%)
- One optional centre-assessed unit (NEA) from a choice of two (20%)

X2 Mandatory Units which include:

R184 - Contemporary Issues in Sport (Exam Assessment)

In this unit, students will learn about a range of topical and contemporary issues in sport, relating to; participation levels and barriers, promotion of values, conduct of players and ethical behaviour, the role of high-profile sporting events, the role of national governing bodies and how technology is used within sport.

R185 - Performance and Leadership in Sports Activities (NEA - including practical)

In this unit, students will learn how to develop their skills as both a performer, in two different sporting activities, and as a leader in one activity. As a leader they will have the opportunity to plan, deliver and review safe and effective sporting activity sessions.

Additional optional centre-assessed units (NEA)

Note: This will be a teacher led class choice which may vary from year to year depending on the cohort of pupils that academic year.

R186 - Sport and the Media (NEA)

In this unit students will learn about how the media and the rise in technology has had a major impact on sport including the different media sources that cover sport, the development and use of technology in sport and the positive and negative impacts of both.

R187 - Increasing Awareness of Outdoor and Adventurous Activities (NEA)

In this unit, students will learn what Outdoor and Adventurous Activity opportunities there are in their local area as well as nationally in the UK. Students will learn how to enjoy the activities safely by finding out what equipment, clothing, facilities and technology you need, as well as completing planning to keep them safe. Students will then be practically assessed in an outdoor and adventurous activity, before evaluating and analysing their performance.

This course is for you if you:

- You already play sport competitively out of school or represent the school in sporting fixtures and regularly attend PE extra-curricular sporting clubs.
 - Students should be keen to develop their physical fitness and leadership skills throughout the duration of the course and have an interest in coaching and leading practical sessions.
 - You are committed to playing sport until the end of Year 11.
 - You have an interest in playing and watching sports outside of school.
- You enjoy practical PE lessons.



Statistics

Miss L Beardsworth

Examination Board/Syllabus: EDEXCEL

Tiers of Entry: Higher Tier (Grades 9-4), Foundation Tier (Grades 5-1)

Course content

Statistics is about making decisions where there is uncertainty. Perhaps one of the most versatile areas of maths, it gives students the skills to collect, analyse, interpret and present data. The course is split into three broad topics: The collection of data, processing, representing and analysing data, and probability.

Collecting Data

In this unit students will study the ways of designing an investigation to test a hypothesis, populations and samples and the different sampling methods, types of data and sources of data. Students will evaluate the different types of data collection and will evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each. They will learn that data often has to be 'cleaned' before it can be used and analysed.

Processing, representing and analysing data

In this unit students will look at the different ways to represent data including: pie charts, stem and leaf diagrams, population pyramids, choropleth maps, time series, scatter graphs, cumulative frequency graphs and histograms. Students will learn to justify appropriate formats and select appropriate forms of representation; recognise where errors in construction lead to graphical misrepresentation; and determine skewness from data.

Students will use measures of dispersion and central tendency (averages) to analyse and compare data sets.

Probability

In this unit students will use collected data to calculate estimates of probabilities, and use probabilities to determine expected and absolute risk. Students will compare theoretical probabilities with experimental probabilities to identify potential bias. Two-way tables, sample space diagrams, tree diagrams and Venn diagrams will be used to represent different outcomes of events. Students will know and use the formal notation for independent and conditional probability and will use the binomial distribution and normal distribution to calculate probabilities.

Assessment

There will be two calculator examination papers, taken at the end of the course, covering all of the above topics. Each paper is 1 hour and 30 minutes and carries equal weighting.

Why Choose Statistics?

If students have a passion for maths and are mathematically or logically inclined then Statistics will be a great course to study. Students should also be confident in explaining their reasoning in extended written answers.

If students enjoy subjects that have a clear relevance to the working world, they will most likely find GCSE Statistics very rewarding. The subject focuses on how statistics are used in the 'real world' and they may be surprised how widely used they actually are. They will learn about the strengths and limitations of statistics in realistic scenarios that won't have them begging the question "When will I ever use this knowledge again?"

GCSE Statistics will be a good option if students enjoy problem solving and decision making as it involves a lot of probability and interpreting data, both of which force fast, logical decisions under time constraints, and the requirement to justify those decisions.

Statistics requires students to have a good memory for mathematical rules and methods, so if they are confident in their ability to recall Math's topics, then taking Statistics will enhance and develop their understanding of GCSE Maths.

If students are considering an A Level in Maths, Biology, Psychology, Geography or Business then GCSE Statistics will be a useful because these subjects also require them to handle and interpret statistics.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIFIC SUBJECTS
PLEASE CONTACT:**

Core Subjects

English	Mr C McAshton
Mathematics	Miss L Beardsworth
Sciences	Mr R Daby
Core PE	Mr L Stubbins

GCSE preferences

Art and Design	Mrs L Jamieson
Computer Science	Mrs V Taylor
Design Technology	Mrs L Jamieson
Drama	Mr A Ashley or your Drama Teacher
Food	Mrs L Jamieson
French	Mrs V Scott
Geography	Mrs J Goulding
History	Ms N Kesterton
Music	Ms C Connell
Photography	Mrs L Jamieson
RE	Mr A Easton
Spanish	Mrs V Scott
Sports Studies	Mr L Stubbins
Statistics	Miss L Beardsworth
Textiles	Mrs L Jamieson

Vocational Subjects

Health and Social Care Btec	Miss C Dodd
Information Technology	Mrs V Taylor
Business Studies	Mrs V Taylor

All members of staff can be contacted at school.

ALL DETAILS IN THIS DOCUMENT ARE CORRECT AS OF:

23 FEBRUARY 2026.

PLEASE REMEMBER:

If the number of students choosing a particular subject is not sufficient to make an appropriate size of group, that subject becomes non-viable and it will be withdrawn.

For some students whose option choices don't fit with the timetable they may be required to move onto their reserve choice

If you have been unfortunate enough to choose a course that becomes non-viable you will be asked at a later stage to adjust your choices.

For further information please contact:

Head of Year 8, Mr Darnbrough

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Garden Lane
Sherburn in Elmet
Leeds
LS25 6AS

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