







#### **Contents**

- **p. 3** A note from the Principal
- **p. 4** Introduction
- **p. 5** GCSEs: key information

#### Information about core subjects

- **p. 7** English Language
- **p. 8** English Literature
- **p. 9** Mathematics
- **p. 10** Science (Combined and Triple Sciences)
- **p. 12** Religious Studies
- p. 13 Physical Education
- **p. 14** PSHE

### Information about optional subjects

#### **GCSEs**

- **p. 15** Art: Art, Craft and Design
- **p. 16** Art: Textile Design
- p. 17 Computing Science
- **p. 18** Design and Technology
- **p. 19** Drama
- **p. 20** Food Preparation and Nutrition
- p. 21 French
- **p. 22** Geography
- p. 23 History
- **p. 24** Music
- **p. 25** Sociology
- p. 26 Spanish

#### Vocational alternatives

- **p. 27** BTEC in Digital Information Technology Level 1/2
- p. 28 Hospitality and Catering BTEC Level 1/2 Award
- p. 29 BTEC Sport Level 1/2
- **p. 30** Additional English and Maths
- **p. 31** Sample options form





### A note from the Principal

Dear parents/carers and students,

I hope that you will find this Options Booklet helpful as you discuss, as a family, the choices your daughter or son will be making over the coming weeks. My colleagues and I are keen to support and advise in this process. In particular, I look forward to seeing you at the Year 9 Options Event on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December.

The two years of preparation for GCSE examinations are the most significant and important years your child will spend in school to date, and GCSE grades are a key element in admission to university or employment.

At St Mary Magdalene, we always seek to ensure that our curriculum is based around the individual needs of the student and over the coming months we will strive to ensure that the choices your son or daughter makes are the right ones for them. To that end, I hope that this Options Booklet will serve you well.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Hussain, Principal





#### Introduction

Dear student.

This booklet is designed for you and your parents/carers to use throughout your GCSE options process. Please read through the booklet and consider its contents carefully. This booklet contains information about GCSEs, advice on how to make your choices, and details about each subject.

This represents only the beginning of your GCSE journey. Over the coming months, you will have individual discussions with your teachers, family group tutor and members of the senior management team – as well as a range of events – to help you in making your choices. Good GCSE grades are crucial to your future success and we will support each of you to achieve your potential. Your attitude to learning now – not just from next year – will determine your level of success. It is your responsibility to work hard in lessons, demonstrate urgency for learning, complete your homework and prepare thoroughly for tests and exams.

The options process will follow the timeframe below:

18th November-22nd November: Year 9 GCSE Options Week

25th November-29th November: All students will be interviewed by a member of the

senior management team

**4<sup>th</sup> December:** Year 9 Options Event, 5.00-7.00pm **16<sup>th</sup> January:** Year 9 Parents' Evening, 4.00-6.30pm

21st January: Options form deadline

You will receive your options form on 4<sup>th</sup> December at the Year 9 Options Event and we recommend that you use the Christmas break to consider your decision, bringing your ideas to the Parents' Evening on 16<sup>th</sup> January to discuss with your teachers and family group tutor. We ask you to make three choices in order of preference plus two reserves. We will aim to meet your first three preferences where possible.

Throughout Years 10 and 11 – just like now – we will push you to achieve your very best, support you along the way and let you know how you're doing. We will also give you guidance on A Level options, universities and careers so that you can successfully progress to the next stage of your education.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak to me, Mr Golding, or any member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Greenwood, Vice Principal





### GCSEs: key information

#### Recent changes to GCSEs

Since September 2015, grades have been given as numbers from 9-1 (not letters from A\*-G), with 9 representing the highest standard, making up around 4.5% of all grades awarded. Grade 4 is sometimes referred to as a 'standard pass' and a grade 5 as a 'strong pass'.

All GCSEs are now 'linear', meaning that students sit all of their examinations at the end of Year 11. Coursework is no longer a part of any GCSE although a small number of subjects involve non-examination assessment (NEA) as part of the course. This could mean, for instance, creating a portfolio or written report under specific conditions.

GCSE content has also changed recently – these changes have been different for every subject, but all subjects have become significantly more challenging. Each subject's GCSE content is explained later in this booklet.

#### Compulsory subjects

All students at St Mary Magdalene will be examined on the following subjects: English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science (Combined Science or Triple Sciences), and Religious Studies. All students will also have PSHE and PE lessons each week, on which there will not be an examination. There is information about what you will study in these subjects on pages 8-14, where they are labelled 'Core'.

#### **EBacc**

Students who achieve a grade 4 in English, Maths, Science, History or Geography and a Modern Foreign Language are recognised as having achieved the English Baccalaureate, or 'EBacc'. This is not an additional qualification but is a description of a specific combination of subjects which the government feels are important. The EBacc is valued by employers and universities and by 2025, the government wants 90% of students to be choosing the EBacc combination. You should be mindful of this when making option choices.

#### Optional subjects

All students will have a further three options. The GCSE subjects you can choose from are: Art (Craft and Design or Textile Design); Computing Science; Design and Technology; Drama; Food Preparation and Nutrition; French; Geography; History; Music; Sociology; and Spanish (pages 15-26). You may also choose to study Triple Sciences (see page 11) – this will take one of your three option places and leave you with two other options.

You can also choose from a range of BTECs and vocational alternatives: Digital Information Technology; Hospitality and Catering; and Sport (pages 27-29). These are studied as an alternative to GCSEs. For each course, you complete a series of units – some are written assignments, such as essays, whilst others are projects. These qualifications are not assessed using grades 9-1 but as Distinction, Merit, or Pass.





#### Alternative pathways

For students who may struggle to achieve a full eight academic GCSEs, we offer additional English and Maths, and some vocational courses may also be appropriate. These students and their parents will be spoken to by Mr Golding.

### How to select your options

When making your choices, you have some key questions to consider:

- In which subjects have I done the best work over the past three years?
- Which subjects am I most interested in?
- Do I think that the 'English Baccalaureate' is important to me and my future? If yes, this means taking at least two Sciences, French or Spanish and History and/or Geography.
- Finally, and least importantly, which subjects do I need for my preferred future career? (Keep in mind that it is your A-Levels and university course that will be most important for this.)

Never be tempted to choose a subject because you like your teacher; they might not be timetabled to teach you for your GCSEs. Also never pick a subject because a friend is doing it: what works well for them might be wrong for you – and you might be placed in different classes anyway.

#### Careers and work experience

It is most important that your subjects are chosen for the right reasons. The best reasons are that you enjoy a subject and are good at it.

The subjects you study in Years 10 and 11 could affect your career choices in the future, so if you have a specific career or university course in mind, then it would be sensible to check which subjects are required for entry. However, to choose a subject that you have struggled with only because it is needed for a particular career is not a good idea: if you get a low grade then you will not be able to enter that career, and if the subject plays a large part in the job then it might not be the right choice for you.

You might not be sure what careers you're interested in right now and that is perfectly normal. You will receive careers advice and information in Years 9, 10 and 11 through PSHE sessions and special workshops and assemblies. You will also have the opportunity to carry out work experience during Year 10, gaining valuable experience of the workplace.

#### **Extracurricular activities**

It is important to maintain a balanced approach to work and other activities. This will help you to enjoy yourself and learn better. It is also very useful when applying for university or future employment that you can show a range of skills and interests. For that reason, we will encourage you to continue to attend enrichment activities in school and pursue your interests outside school.

Throughout your time in Years 10 and 11, you will also be encouraged to take advantage of the many trips and activities that the school arranges – in the UK and beyond. We hope many of you will also take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award.





Core

## English Language

Exam board: AQA Course Code: 8700

#### Outline of course:

The study of English Language helps to develop all students into strong, confident communicators, able to express themselves clearly and able to analyse, synthesise, compare and evaluate information.

Through studying English Language at GCSE, students will explore a range of extracts from 20th or 21st century prose fiction texts, with a focus on openings, endings, narrative perspectives and points of view, narrative or descriptive passages, character, atmospheric descriptions and other appropriate narrative and descriptive approaches. Students will apply these techniques to their own writing, crafting passages of creative writing to demonstrate their narrative and descriptive skills in response to a written prompt, scenario or visual image.

Students will also study non-fiction texts drawn from the 19th century, and either the 20th or 21st century. The combination will provide students with an opportunity to consider viewpoints and perspectives over time. Choice of genre will include high quality journalism, articles, reports, essays, travel writing, accounts, sketches, letters, diaries, autobiography and biographical passages or other appropriate non-fiction and literary non-fiction forms. Students will then apply non-fiction writing skills in their own original writing, considering audience, purpose and form, using a range of opinions, statements and writing scenarios to provoke a response.

#### Assessment:

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing (written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes, 80 marks, 50% of GCSE)

Section A: Reading- one literature fiction text. Section B: Writing- descriptive or narrative writing.

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives (written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes, 80 marks, 50% of GCSE)

Section A: Reading- one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text.

Section B: Writing-writing to present a viewpoint.

There is no foundation or higher tier for either English exam so all students will sit the same papers.

Who to contact for more information: Ms Alderson





Exam board: AQA Course Code: 8702

#### Outline of course:

Through studying literature, our students will explore the world around them, scrutinising history, culture and society, and holding up a mirror to the world around them in order to make meaningful connections with wider life.

In Paper 1, students will study Shakespeare's play Macbeth, and Charles Dickens' novel, A Christmas Carol. Students will explore character, setting and themes, as well as learn to closely analyse how the writer presents these elements through language, form and structure.

In Paper 2, students will study JB Priestley's stage play, An Inspector Calls, and the AQA poetry anthology Love and Relationships. Students will analyse the presentation of themes in the play through character, setting and language, and understand the wider context in which it was written. As well as learning how to analyse and compare poems in the anthology, students will learn how to explore unfamiliar poems and extract meaning from their form and structure as well as the language, for the unseen question in Paper 2.

#### Assessment:

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel (written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes, 64 marks, 40% of GCSE).

Section A - Shakespeare: students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.

Section B - The 19th-century novel: students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry (written exam: 2 hour 15 minutes, 96 marks, 60% of GCSE)

Section A - Modern texts: students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text.

Section B - Poetry: students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.

Section C - Unseen poetry: Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

There is no foundation or higher tier for either English exam so all students will sit the same papers.

Who to contact for more information: Ms Alderson





Mathematics Core

**Exam board:** Edexcel **Course Code:** 1MA1

#### Outline of course:

This is a two-year course in which students study a variety of different units:

- Number
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- Algebra
- Statistics and probability
- Geometry and measure

Mathematical thinking is important for all members of a modern society, for its use in the workplace and for personal decision making. Maths not only equips us with ways to describe, analyse and influence the world; it can also stimulate moments of pleasure and wonder when problems are solved for the first time, or when we notice hidden connections. Maths is fundamental to national prosperity in providing tools for understanding science, engineering, technology and economics.

Students at St Mary Magdalene are taught to become functional and financially capable using mathematics. They also experience maths as a creative discipline. We want to develop their ability to think logically and creatively. We encourage students to persevere and to become resourceful problem solvers. Maths naturally transcends cultural boundaries and its importance is universally recognised.

At St Mary Magdalene, we aim to make Maths enjoyable, exciting and a worthwhile experience for all students. Every course is delivered by well-structured schemes of work which are constantly updated to reflect curriculum changes.

#### Assessment:

The Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9 to 1) in Mathematics is a tiered qualification. There are two tiers:

- Foundation tier grades 1 5
- Higher tier grades grades 3 9

The assessment for each tier of entry consists of three externally-examined papers, all three must be from the same tier of entry. Students must complete all three papers in the same assessment series.

Students will sit three papers, one non-calculator paper and two calculator papers. Each assessment is:

- A written examination with a range of question types
- 1 hour and 30 minutes (both Foundation and Higher tier papers)
- 80 marks available (total of 240 marks)

Who to contact for more information: Ms Brady





### Science (Combined Science: Trilogy)

Core

Exam board: AQA Course Code: 8464

#### Outline of course:

The Combined Science course will allow all students to learn essential aspects of the knowledge, methods, processes and uses of science. This course will allow them to see how the natural world can be described through scientific detail.

Students who wish to select separate Sciences ('Triple Science') should see p.11.

During the course, students will be able to develop an understanding of a number of key ideas which include:

- the use of conceptual models and theories to make sense of the observed diversity of natural phenomena
- the assumption that every effect has one or more cause
- that change is driven by differences between different objects and systems when they interact
- that many such interactions occur over a distance and over time without direct contact
- that science progresses through a cycle of hypothesis, practical experimentation, observation, theory development and review
- that data analysis is a central element of many theories and of scientific methods of inquiry.

Paper 1: Biology 1: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and response; Bioenergetics.

Paper 2: Biology 2: Homeostasis and response; Inheritance; Variation and evolution; Ecology.

Paper 3: Chemistry 1: Atomic structure and the periodic table; Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry; Chemical changes; Energy changes.

Paper 4: Chemistry 2: The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis; Chemistry of the atmosphere; Using resources.

Paper 5: Physics 1: Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; Atomic structure.

Paper 6: Physics 2: Forces; Waves; Magnetism and electromagnetism.

#### Assessment:

All papers are assessed through a written exam, lasting 1 hour and fifteen minutes. Each exam is worth 70 marks.

Who to contact for more information: Mr Hopkins





### Science (Triple Science: Biology, Physics and Chemistry) Optional

Exam board: AQA

Course Code: Biology: 8461
Chemistry: 8462 Physics: 8463

#### Outline of course:

This course allows students to achieve three distinct GCSEs in each of the sciences and develops the range of their scientific knowledge and understanding beyond that of those doing combined science. This course is an ideal starting point for those wishing to enter the fields of medicine and science.

GCSE Biology: 1. Cell biology. 2. Organisation. 3. Infection and response. 4. Bioenergetics. 5. Homeostasis and response. 6. Inheritance, variation and evolution. 7. Ecology. 8. Key ideas

GCSE Chemistry: 1. Atomic structure and the periodic table. 2. Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter. 3. Quantitative chemistry. 4. Chemical changes. 5. Energy changes. 6. The rate and extent of chemical change. 7. Organic chemistry. 8. Chemical analysis. 9. Chemistry of the atmosphere. 10. Using resources

GCSE Physics: 1. Energy. 2. Electricity. 3. Particle model of matter. 4. Atomic structure. 5. Forces. 6. Waves. 7. Magnetism and electromagnetism. 8. Space physics (physics only)

Triple science is a qualification that is a guided options choice and is an EBacc qualifying subject. However, we recommend that you are predicted a grade 6 or above in science if you wish to consider this course.

#### Assessment:

Students will sit two written examinations for each subject. Each exam is:

- 1 hour and 45 minutes
- 100 marks
- 50% of the GCSE qualification for each separate Science

Biology Paper 1: Topics 1, 2, 3, and 4 Biology Paper 2: Topics 5, 6 and 7

Chemistry Paper 1: Topics 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 Chemistry Paper 2: Topics 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10

Physics Paper 1: Topics 1, 2, 3 and 4 Physics Paper 2: Topics 5, 6, 7 and 8

#### Choose this subject if...

The study of science, particularly beyond GCSE, allows access into a great range of careers across many industries. These include biologist, chemist, physicist, government scientist, healthcare scientist, science technician, biomedical scientist, doctor, nurse, paramedic, astronomer, and many more.

Who to contact for more information: Mr Hopkins





## Religious Studies

**Exam board:** AQA **Course Code:** 8062NA

#### Outline of course:

GCSE RS is a diverse course allowing students the opportunity to study beliefs, teachings and practices within both Christianity and Judaism.

In the Christianity unit, students will study key beliefs about the nature of God, such as God being all-powerful and loving. Beliefs and teachings surrounding the incarnation, evil and suffering and sin will also be studied. When studying Christian practices, students will learn about prayer, sacraments, pilgrimage and baptism.

In the Judaism unit, students will study the nature of God focusing on God as one, as creator and as a law-giver and judge who is all-loving. Students will also have the opportunity to learn about Jewish family life and festivals.

All GCSE students will have the opportunity to go on trips to further enhance their knowledge and understanding of both Christianity and Judaism.

In addition, students will study four ethical themes from different Christian perspectives. These themes are relationships and families, religion and life, peace and conflict and human rights. Many contemporary issues are explored in these four units including: marriage, divorce, abortion, euthanasia, war, pacifism, prejudice and discrimination.

Therefore, the study of these themes, alongside the Christian and Jewish faiths, will allow our students to develop an understanding of the contemporary issues in our world while reflecting on their own views on their journey to becoming global citizens.

#### Assessment:

Two exam papers: one will focus on Christianity and Judaism and the second on the four themes studied. In paper 1, students will be expected to spend approximately 50 minutes on each religion.

Each exam will be 1 hour 45 minutes. Students will get marked for their spelling, punctuation and grammar on each paper.

Who to contact for more information: Mr Watson







**Exam board:** n/a **Course Code:** n/a

#### Outline of course:

During Years 10 and 11, students will cover a wide range of sports in their core PE lessons. Traditional sports will continue to be taught, building on students' prior learning in Years 7, 8 and 9. Students will also be introduced to, and taught, skills in some unfamiliar sports to broaden their experience of physical education.

Students interested in taking a full examined course in Physical Education should see page 29 for information about the BTEC Sport.

As a PE Department, we aim to get the students as active as we can in lessons, thus improving their physical fitness. We aim to cover a wide variety of topics as we strive to promote a healthy active lifestyle and hope our students learn enough from their PE lessons to continue to sustain and remain involved in physical activity.

The majority of the curriculum is based around team sports and invasion games, providing students with lifelong skills. The following topics will be taught:

- Basketball
- Football
- Volleyball
- Netball
- Handball
- Trampolining
- Badminton
- Health Related Fitness
- Leadership
- Athletics
- Striking and Fielding

This course is not examined and no grade is given at the end of Year 11.

Assessment: n/a

Who to contact for more information: Mr Golding or Mr Lawrence





PSHE Core

**Exam board:** n/a **Course Code:** n/a

#### Outline of course:

Over the course of Years 10 and 11, students will study elements of the following in a spiral curriculum:

- 1. Health and wellbeing
- 2. Relationships
- 3. Living in the wider world

PSHE will be taught each week in family groups. It is not assessed, but it forms a key part of students' education.

In PSHE, students will acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives now and in the future. PSHE education develops the qualities and attributes pupils need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society.

PSHE education equips pupils to live healthy, safe, productive, capable, responsible and balanced lives. It encourages them to be enterprising and supports them in making effective transitions, positive learning and career choices and in achieving economic wellbeing. Students will reflect on and clarify their own values and attitudes.

PSHE education contributes to personal development by helping students to build their confidence, resilience and self-esteem, and to identify and manage risk, make informed choices and understand what influences their decisions. It enables them to recognise, accept and shape their identities, to understand and accommodate difference and change, to manage emotions and to communicate constructively in a variety of settings. By developing an understanding of themselves, empathy and the ability to work with others, students will be well-prepared to form and maintain good relationships later in life, develop the essential skills for future employability and better enjoy and manage their lives.

Assessment: n/a

Who to contact for more information: Ms Alderson





### Art: Art, Craft and Design

**Optional** 

**Exam board:** Edexcel **Course Code:** 1AD0

#### Outline of course:

The GCSE in Art, Craft and Design is a broad and flexible course that requires students to develop an appreciation of the creative process through a practical response, using a variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional media, materials, techniques and processes. Students should explore critically how artists, craftspeople and designers from diverse cultures, times and societies have arrived at solutions and communicated meaning using the formal elements. Students should use this knowledge when developing new ideas, recording observations and creating outcomes which fully realise their personal intentions.

All students will be required to keep a sketchbook in which to record their experiences, ideas, experiments and knowledge of art and artists.

To do well in this subject you will need to:

- Have good observational drawing skills.
- Have an open and creative mind.
- Produce a sketchbook which shows the development and investigation of your ideas.
- Explore and write about the work of Artists, Craftspeople and Designers.
- Research various art forms and ideas connected with your work in your own time.

Students who study Art, Craft and Design may not also study Textiles.

#### Assessment:

Students will complete two components of work over two academic years.

Component 1 is a portfolio that in total shows explicit coverage of the four assessment objectives. It must include a sustained project evidencing the journey from initial engagement to the realisation of intentions and a selection of further work undertaken during the student's course of study. There is no time limit, this component contributes 60% of the overall GCSE grade, is a 96 marks unit and is a non-exam assessment (NEA).

Component 2 requires for students to respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment paper relating to their subject title, evidencing coverage of all four assessment objectives. Students will have a preparatory period as well as 10 hours supervised time under exam conditions. This component contributes 40% of the GCSE grade and is a 96-mark unit.

#### Choose this subject if...

You are interested in careers in Architecture, Graphic Design, Teaching, Jewellery Design, Fashion Design, Television work, Shoe Design, Textile Design, Film making, Printing, Pottery, Animation, Illustration, Costume Design, Theatre Design and Garden Design.

Who to contact for more information: Ms Key





### **Art: Textile Design**

Optional

**Exam board:** Edexcel **Course Code:** 1TE0

#### Outline of course:

Textile Design is a versatile practice that involves the creation, selection, manipulation and application of a range of materials such as fibres, yarns and fabrics, and processes such as weaving, knitting, stitching and printing to create designs and products. Textile designers work in multi-disciplinary ways to create ideas, materials and techniques for different applications. Textile designers also play an important role in the world of fashion, theatre, performance and retail.

All students will be required to keep a sketchbook in which to record their experiences, ideas, experiments and knowledge of Art/Textiles and artists within a range of different medias.

To do well in this subject you will need to:

- Have good observational drawing skills.
- Have an open and creative mind.
- Produce a sketchbook which shows the development and investigation of your ideas using a wide range of skills from drawing to fabric manipulation.
- Explore and write about the work of Artists, Craftspeople and Designers.
- Research various art forms and ideas connected with your work in your own time.

Students who study Textiles may not also study Art, Craft and Design.

#### Assessment:

Students will complete two components of work over two academic years.

Component 1 is a portfolio that in total shows explicit coverage of the four assessment objectives. It must include a sustained project evidencing the journey from initial engagement to the realisation of intentions and a selection of further work undertaken during the student's course of study. There is no time limit, this component contributes 60% of the overall GCSE grade, is a 96 marks unit and is a non-exam assessment (NEA).

Component 2 requires for students to respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment paper relating to their subject title, evidencing coverage of all four assessment objectives. Students will have a preparatory period as well as 10 hours supervised time under exam conditions. This component contributes 40% of the GCSE grade and is a 96-mark unit.

#### Choose this subject if...

You are interested in careers in Architecture, Graphic Design, Teaching, Jewellery Design, Fashion Design, Television work, Shoe Design, Textile Design, Film making, Printing, Pottery, Animation, Illustration, Costume Design, Theatre Design and Garden Design.

Who to contact for more information: Ms Key





### **Computing Science**

**Optional** 

**Exam board:** OCR **Course Code:** J276

#### Outline of course:

The course consists of 3 sections:

Component 1: This component explores the Central Processing Unit, computer memory and storage, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security and system software. It also investigates the impact of Computer Science in a global context through the study of the ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with Computer Science.

Component 2: This component investigates algorithms and programming techniques, how to produce robust programs, computational logic, translators and facilities of computing languages and data representation.

Component 3: Assessment tasks will be provided at the start of the assessment. Students will analyse, design, implement and test a solution to a given problem.

#### Assessment:

Component 1: Computer Systems - Written Exam – 1 hour 30 minute - 50% of total GCSE. The exam paper is out of 80 marks and consists of multiple choice, short answer and longer answer questions

Component 2: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming – Written Exam – 1 hour 30 minutes – 50% of total GCSE. The exam paper is out of 80 marks and consists of a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and longer answer questions and extended response questions.

Component 3: Programming technique – Non-examined assessment. Students are given 20 hours to complete a given task. This consolidates the learning across the specification through practical activity.

#### Choose this subject if...

You would like to become a website developer, a games developer, set up your very own IT based business or even become a forensics computer analyst. Computer scientists are needed in every industry, so by taking Computer Science you could potentially work anywhere – the opportunities are endless.

Who to contact for more information: Mr A Hussain





### **Design and Technology**

**Optional** 

Exam board: AQA Course Code: 8552

#### Outline of course:

In this two year course, students will develop their designing and making capabilities in a range of different materials, such as wood metal and plastic as well as incorporating electronics and textiles. A broad range of design techniques using specialist technical equipment will be learnt.

Students will study the subject through exciting short focused design challenges that will build their subject knowledge and skills, and lead to outcomes that students will make and keep.

#### Assessment:

Students will be assessed in core technical principles (materials, mechanics, energy), specialist technical principles (wood, metal, plastic, electronics, textiles), and designing and making principles (research, designing, tools & equipment, prototyping).

Written exam: 2 hours - 100 marks - 50% of GCSE.

Non-examined assessment (NEA): a substantial design and make task through a contextual challenge set by AQA Students will produce a prototype and portfolio of evidence. 100 marks - 50% of GCSE.

### Choose this subject if...

- You want to design and make products
- You like using tools and equipment
- You have an interest in Science and Engineering
- You like to work with your hands in a practical environment
- You want to study or pursue a career in Design

Who to contact for more information: Mr McPeake





Drama Optional

Exam board: AQA Course Code: 8261

#### Outline of course:

There are three components: Understanding Drama, Devising Drama, Texts in Practice.

Understanding Drama encompasses the following: getting to grips with theatrical terms; studying a set play; see and evaluate live theatre.

Devising Drama encompasses the following: independent work and capacity to learn focusing on one role as a theatre practitioner; preparation and live performance, actively contributing to a live performance.

Texts in Practice encompasses the following: contributing to a live performance in the role that the student developed during Devising Drama.

#### Assessment:

Understanding Drama: Assessed through a written exam. The sections cover: theatre roles and terminology, knowledge and analysis/evaluation of the set text, analysis/evaluation of live theatre experienced.

Devising Drama: Students must present a working log book of their devising process making use of self-analysis/evaluation as well as being assessed in their live performance as a performer, lighting designer, sound designer, set designer, costume designer or puppet designer.

Texts in Practice: students must perform or create realised designs for two extracts from one play which contrasts to the set play studied in Understanding Drama. They can be assessed as a performer, lighting designer, sound designer, set designer, costume designer or puppet designer.

#### Choose this subject if...

You love exploring characters, human nature and important themes.

You enjoy a practically weighted subject.

You're interested in developing skills in acting, directing, technology, art and design, public speaking, critical thinking, self-confidence, self-development, literature analysis, physical performance and writing.

You are interested in a career in: entertainment, events, TV/film, theatre, publishing, public speaking, management, public relations, human resources, marketing, advertising, writing, design, technology, infrastructure, the civil service, or public sector work.

Who to contact for more information: Ms Douglas



### **Food Preparation and Nutrition**

**Optional** 

**Exam board:** Edugas **Course Code:** 3560

#### Outline of course:

The WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Food and Nutrition equips learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. It encourages learners to cook and enables them to make informed decisions about food and nutrition and allows them to acquire knowledge in order to be able to feed themselves and others affordably and nutritiously, now and later in life.

This course will give you the skills to confidently and successfully design and make a range of culinary meals and execute them. It will enable you to develop a clear understanding of the relationship between food and your body and if you have an interest in sports or medical/science careers this will help you understand how food relates to fitness and health.

This course will allow you to explore a variety of cuisines from around the world and develop an understanding of how the economy, environmental, ethical and social-cultural impacts have been influenced by food. It is the perfect GCSE for any foodie with a real passion for the kitchen.

#### Assessment:

NEA 60% - 2 Assessments

Exam 40%

### Choose this subject if...

You would like to:

- Demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills by planning, preparing and cooking a variety of food commodities whilst using different cooking techniques and equipment
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties and chemical characteristics of food as well as a sound knowledge of the nutritional content of food and drinks
- Understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of poor diet and health
- Understand the economic, environmental, ethical and socio-cultural influences on food availability, production processes, diet and health choices
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of functional and nutritional properties, sensory qualities and microbiological food safety considerations when preparing, processing, storing, cooking and serving food
- Understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions (traditional Welsh, British and international) to inspire new ideas or modify existing recipes.

You want to pursue a career in catering, sports, travel and tourism or hospitality.

Who to contact for more information: Ms McKenzie





French Optional

Exam board: AQA Course Code: 8658

#### Outline of course:

GCSE French is divided into 3 themes:

- 1: Identity and culture
- 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest
- 3: Current and future study and employment

Each theme is divided into four topics, among which students will find motivating sections such as social media, music, food and eating out, travel and tourism, healthy and unhealthy living, charity and voluntary work, the environment, etc.

Students will learn to understand and provide information and opinions in the target language about these themes and relating to their own experiences and those of other people, including countries/communities where French is spoken. We will also be providing students with cultural enrichment during lesson time at various points throughout the course. This is not examined, but in MFL we think it is crucial that students gain a cultural insight into the countries where the language is spoken. This may take the form of an English discussion, where the objective is to inspire students. Studying French will also develop students' critical thinking and analytical skills, key skills for Sixth Form, the professional world and beyond.

#### Assessment:

The assessment will consist of four exam papers, one on each of the linguistic skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading & Responding, and Writing. All four exams are equally weighted at 25% of the total GCSE.

GCSE French has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series.

#### Choose this subject if...

"The boundaries of my language signify the boundaries of my world." - Ludwig Wittgenstein

At St Mary Magdalene, we are passionate about the benefits that learning a language can bring. We strongly believe in languages as a skill for life and something students should enjoy and find rewarding.

Our French course offers an assessment which expands students' cultural knowledge whilst developing their language skills in preparation for a successful future, wherever it might be.

We are confident our course will deliver the right results for your children. We want to provide for students of all abilities, and to deliver the assessments and results our students deserve.

Who to contact for more information: Mrs Charlton or Mrs Goddy





**Geography** Optional

Exam board: AQA Course Code: 8035

#### Outline of course:

The world we live in is changing at an alarming rate. Geography encompasses a perfect blend of Physical and Human Geography. There are three units that you will study over the two years and you have already had an insight into some of these and the skills required to answer GCSE questions:

Unit 1- Living with the physical environment: In this unit we will study a dynamic nature of physical processes and systems, and human interaction with them in a variety of places. This includes studying; volcanoes, earthquakes, tropical rainforests, deserts and the amazing coasts and river landscapes of the UK.

Unit 2- Challenges in the human environment: The aims of this unit are to develop an understanding of the factors that produce a diverse variety of human environments; the dynamic development of Nigeria, Mumbai and the UK; the need for sustainable management; and the areas of current and future challenge and opportunity for these environments.

Unit 3- Geographical applications: This section can be broken down in to two components; issue evaluation and fieldwork. For issue evaluation a resource booklet is released 12 weeks prior to the exam, this contains information on a current issue around the world. Students then evaluate this issue and come to a judgement about this in the exam. For the fieldwork component we will visit a river and urban landscape around London and conduct fieldwork which will be assessed in the final exam.

#### Assessment:

You will complete three written papers at the end of Year 11:

Paper 1- Physical environments: The challenge of natural hazards, The living world (tropical rainforests and hot deserts), Physical landscapes in the UK (rivers and coasts) and Geographical skills. (35% of GCSE).

Paper 2- Human environments: Urban issues and challenges (London and Mumbai), Changing economic world (UK and Nigeria), Resource management and Geographical skills (35% of GCSE).

Paper 3- Geographical investigations: Issue evaluation, fieldwork enquiries and skills. (30% of GCSE).

#### Choose this subject if...

You would like to understand the world around you! Geography is at the forefront of all major world issues. The course will give you a chance to get to grips with some of the big questions which affect our world, such as climate change, world development, natural hazards and natural processes which shape our world. There has never been a more important time to study Geography! The Guardian newspaper found geographers to be the most employable graduates because of the range of skills and knowledge you develop. It is very practical, with opportunities to learn new skills such as map skills, interpreting photographs, fieldwork skills, presenting, role play and debating.

Who to contact for more information: Ms Hickman





History Optional

**Exam board:** OCR (SHP) **Course Code:** J411

#### Outline of course:

GSCE History is a diverse course that allows and encourages students to become curious, to develop their own opinions based on a respect for evidence, and to build a deeper understanding of the present by engaging with and questioning the past at a local, national and global level. The course is based on content which helps learners to address fundamental issues in human history, it brings together people, events and issues that students will find engaging and that will stimulate a desire to explore the similarities and differences between people's lives in the past and their own lives now. The course is broken down into three components:

- 1: (a) Thematic Study: The People's Health, c.1250 to present. Students will examine people's responses to the Black Death, the impact of government on public health, how people responded to the cholera epidemics, Spanish Influenza and AIDS.
- (b) British Depth Study: The Elizabethans, 1580-1603. This unit enables learners to understand late-Elizabethan society and the dangerous forces at work that tested the stability of Elizabeth's kingdom.
- 2: History Around Us. Students will carry out real historical fieldwork investigating a significant local historical site. The study enables students to understand how a site has changed over time and helps them to find a connection with people's lives in the past.
- 3: (a) Period Study: The Making of America, 1789-1900. Students will investigate the making of America, from the inauguration of the first president in 1789 to the point when the USA was set to become the world's dominant power.
- (b) World Depth Study: Living under Nazi Rule, 1933-1945. This world depth study will enable students to understand the impact of Nazi dictatorship on people's lives within Germany and across occupied Europe.

#### Assessment:

The assessment will consist of three exam papers based on the topics studied. Components 1 and 3 will be 1 hour and 45 minutes each whilst Component 2 will be a 1 hour exam. Students will get marked for their spelling, punctuation and grammar on each paper.

#### Choose this subject if...

Choosing History is great foundation for your future! You will learn skills that can be applied in a huge range of careers and life situations. If you are interested in a career in law, business, journalism or economics then History is a great choice that will give you the skills needed to succeed in these areas. History teaches you to sharpen your critical thinking abilities, such as analysis, research, communication, debating and problem solving. It is an excellent subject for keeping your options open when choosing a degree.

Who to contact for more information: Mr Brown





Music Optional

**Exam board:** Edugas **Course Code:** C660QS

#### Outline of course:

The WJEC Eduques specification encourages an integrated approach to the three distinct disciplines of performing, composing and appraising through four interrelated areas of study.

The four areas of study are designed to develop knowledge and understanding of music through the study of a variety of genres and styles in a wider context.

The Western Classical Tradition forms the basis of Musical Forms and Devices (area of study 1), and learners should take the opportunity to explore these forms and devices further in the other three areas of study.

Music for Ensemble (area of study 2) allows learners to look more closely at texture and sonority.

Film Music (area of study 3) and Popular Music (area of study 4) provide an opportunity to look at contrasting styles and genres of music.

#### Assessment:

One written exam (1 hour 15 minutes)

Two performances (1 solo and 1 ensemble)

Two compositions

### Choose this subject if...

You should choose this course if you love music and you want to improve your skills as a performer and composer. This course will also deepen your understanding of the theoretical elements of music, as well as examining music from a cultural and contextual perspective.

Who to contact for more information: Mr McInnis





Sociology Optional

Exam board: AQA Course Code: 8192

#### Outline of course:

GCSE Sociology helps students to gain knowledge and understanding of key social structures, processes and issues through the study of families, education, crime and deviance and social stratification.

Students will develop their analytical, assimilation and communication skills by comparing and contrasting perspectives on a variety of social issues, constructing reasoned arguments, making substantiated judgements and drawing reasoned conclusions.

By studying sociology, students will develop transferable skills including how to:

- investigate facts and make deductions
- develop opinions and new ideas on social issues
- analyse and better understand the social world.

#### Assessment:

Paper 1: 50% of GCSE

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes

What's assessed:

- The sociology of families
- The sociology of education
- Relevant areas of social theory and methodology

Paper 2: 50% of GCSE

• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes

What's assessed:

- The sociology of crime and deviance
- The sociology of social stratification
- Relevant areas of social theory and methodology

Students will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.

#### Choose this subject if...

You are interested in understanding more about the society you live in while building a strong foundation of knowledge that can lead to a clear humanities pathway at post 16.

Using case studies like Grenfell we will evaluate our society. We will focus our studies on the areas of the family, our education system, social equality and crime in our society.

In addition, you will gain skills of research with the aspiration of undertaking your own action research within our community.

Who to contact for more information: Mr Watson





Spanish Optional

Exam board: AQA Course Code: 8658

#### Outline of course:

GCSE Spanish is divided into 3 themes:

- 1: Identity and culture
- 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest
- 3: Current and future study and employment

Each theme is divided into four topics, among which students will find motivating sections such as social media, music, food and eating out, travel and tourism, healthy and unhealthy living, charity and voluntary work, the environment, etc.

Students will learn to understand and provide information and opinions in the target language about these themes and relating to their own experiences and those of other people, including countries/communities where French is spoken. We will also be providing students with cultural enrichment during lesson time at various points throughout the course. This is not examined, but in MFL we think it is crucial that students gain a cultural insight into the countries where the language is spoken. This may take the form of an English discussion, where the objective is to get inspire students. Studying Spanish will also develop students' critical thinking and analytical skills, key skills for Sixth Form, the professional world and beyond.

#### Assessment:

The assessment will consist of four exam papers, one on each of the linguistic skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading & Responding, and Writing. All four exams are equally weighted at 25% of the total GCSE.

GCSE Spanish has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series.

#### Choose this subject if...

"The boundaries of my language signify the boundaries of my world." - Ludwig Wittgenstein

At St Mary Magdalene, we are passionate about the benefits that learning a language can bring. We strongly believe in languages as a skill for life and something students should enjoy and find rewarding.

Our Spanish course offers an assessment which expands students' cultural knowledge whilst developing their language skills in preparation for a successful future, wherever it might be.

We are confident our course will deliver the right results for your children. We want to provide for students of all abilities, and to deliver the assessments and results our students deserve.

Who to contact for more information: Mrs Charlton or Ms Tormo





### BTEC in Digital Information Technology Level 1/2

**Optional** 

**Exam board:** Edexcel **Course Code:** 603/2740/6

#### Outline of course:

The course consists of 3 sections:

Component 1: Exploring UI and Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques: Learners will develop their understanding of what makes an effective user interface and how to effectively manage a project. They will use this understanding to plan, design and create a user interface.

Component 2: Collecting, Presenting and interpreting Data - Learners will understand the characteristics of data and information and how they help organisations in decision making. They will use data manipulation methods to create a dashboard to present and draw conclusions from information.

Component 3: Effective Digital Working Practices - Learners will explore how organisations use digital systems and the wider implications associated with their use.

#### Assessment:

Component 1: Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques – Internally Assessed – 30%

Component 2: Collecting, Presenting and interpreting Data – Internally Assessed – 30%

Component 3: Effective Digital Working Practices – External Assessment Exam – 40%

#### Choose this subject if...

When you have completed the qualification, you will have developed a broad range of practical skills used in digital functions. The digital aspects covered within this qualification are not covered in the GCSE in Computer Science. This qualification will give you a sense of the type of skills, knowledge and behaviours required in the modern digital sector. This will allow you to decide whether the digital sector is for you and, if so, where your strengths lie.

Once successfully completed, you may wish to progress to further study with a BTEC National in IT or Computing at Level 3. You could also progress to a Computer Science AS or A level. These qualifications build upon some of the aspects covered within this qualification and are generally broad in the selection of units available. If you then wish to specialise your learning in a specific digital vocation, you could consider a BTEC Level 2 Technical Diploma in Digital Technology, which enables you to select from three pathways: Data Management, Digital Applications or Network & Cyber Security.

Alternatively, you may want to progress to an apprenticeship, for example at Level 3 in Digital Marketer, Infrastructure Technician or Software Development Technician.

Who to contact for more information: Mr A Hussain



### Hospitality and Catering Level 1/2 Award

**Optional** 

**Exam board:** Edugas **Course Code:** 601/7703/2

#### Outline of course:

This Level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering has been designed to develop in learners the knowledge and understanding related to a range of hospitality and catering providers; how they operate and what they have to take into account to be successful.

There is the opportunity to learn about issues related to nutrition and food safety and how they affect successful hospitality and catering operations. In this qualification, learners will also have the opportunity to develop some food preparation and cooking skills as well as transferable skills of problem-solving, organisation and time management, planning and communication.

The ability to cook safely and confidently is a great skill to have. Understanding the professional context of catering allows you to dive deeper into the understanding of job roles and conditions of working with food. This course is the real life MasterChef test: understanding the operation of a kitchen, front of house and customer requirements. If you have a passion for cooking and want to show off your culinary skills, this is definitely the course for you.

#### Assessment:

There are three assessments:

- The Hospitality and Catering Industry Onscreen assessment
- The Hospitality and Catering Industry Paper based assessment
- Hospitality and Catering in Action Internally assessed controlled assessment

### Choose this subject if...

You would like to:

- Understand the environment in which hospitality and catering providers operate including job roles, requirements and working conditions.
- Understand how hospitality and catering provisions operate including operation of the kitchen, front of house and meeting customer requirements.
- Understand how hospitality and catering provision meets health and safety requirements.
- Know how food can cause ill health.
- Be able to propose a hospitality and catering provision to meet specific requirements.

You want to pursue a career in catering, sports, travel and tourism or hospitality.

Who to contact for more information: Ms Hughes







Optional

**Exam board:** Pearson Edexcel **Course Code:** 600/4779/3

#### Outline of course:

The BTEC Level 1 and 2 First Award in Sports is a vocational option assessed in two ways; an online onscreen exam worth 40% and practical sports assessment with coursework worth 60%.

The onscreen exam is based on Unit 1- Fitness for Sport and Exercise. The students will cover Unit 1 during the Autumn Term and beginning of the Spring Term, with the aim of taking their onscreen exam before Easter. The onscreen exam is based on the following subjects; components of physical and skill related fitness, methods of training, principles of training, and fitness testing to improve sporting performance. When Unit 1 is complete, the students will then move on to Unit 2-Practical Sports Performance.

The theory lessons will take place in a classroom environment and the practical lessons in either the Sports Hall, MUGA, 4G Pitch or Athletics Track. Students will also have to carry out a controlled assessment in Unit 3 - Applying the Principles of Personal Training. Students will have to create their own personalised training programme to improve their current fitness and performance.

#### Assessment:

Unit 1: Fitness for Sport and Exercise - onscreen assessment Units 2-6: Internally assessed controlled assessments.

Unit	Compulsory Core Units	Assessment method	GLH
1	Fitness for Sport and Exercise	External	30
2	Practical Sports Performance	Internal	30
3	Applying the Principles of Personal	Internal	30
	Training		
Optional Specialist Units (a choice of 1 of the below)			
4	The Mind and Sports Performance	Internal	30
5	The Sports Performance in Action	Internal	30
6	Leading Sports Activities	Internal	30

#### Choose this subject if...

- You want to work within the sporting industry with employment opportunities such as Physiotherapy, Sports Coaching, PE Teaching, Psychology of Sport, Sports Analysis, Personal Training/Fitness Coaching.
- You want the knowledge and knowhow to keep yourself fit, healthy and active for life.
- You find the human body fascinating.

This will be an interesting and challenging learning experience taught by very passionate and enthusiastic PE teachers. Students will be introduced to key sporting ideas and show how these interact with practical performance to improve health and fitness.

Who to contact for more information: Mr Lawrence or Mr Golding



### **Additional English and Maths**



Optional

**Exam board:** AQA **Course Code:** 5970

#### Outline of course:

This course is designed to help students achieve their GCSEs in English Literature, English Language and Maths – and it also leads to an additional English qualification.

Additional English provides support for students working towards achieving their English GCSE. The focus is on developing students' skills in reading and comprehension, writing, and spoken language. Students will also be entered for the 'Step up to English' Entry Level Certificate. This is a nationally recognised qualification that give students the opportunity to achieve a certified award. Step up to English is designed by AQA, our GCSE English Literature and Language exam board and its intention is to help students develop their reading and writing skills and raise their attainment in GCSE English exams. Students will work towards their Silver Step with an option of moving onto the Gold Step.

Additional Maths supports those students who have gaps in their mathematical knowledge or who have struggled during Maths lessons. Students will work through the Edexcel course 'Mathematics access to foundation'. The contents of this course include number bonds, power of 10, times tables, place values, directed numbers (negative numbers) in real life, fractions, money, integers, decimals, percentages, proportions, function machines and order of operations.

#### Assessment:

For information on the Maths and English GCSEs, see pages 7-9. Additional Maths is not assessed separately to the Maths GCSE.

Students of 'Step up to English' will be assessed whenever they are ready, through two non-exam assessments which each make up 50% of the overall assessment:

- Component 1: Literacy Topics, exploring themes.
   Externally-set non-exam assessment: up to 1 hour and 30 minutes.
- Component 2: Creative Reading and Writing.

  Externally-set non-exam assessment: up to 1 hour and 30 minutes.

#### Choose this subject if...

- You would like more help with your Maths and English work.
- You would like to achieve another English qualification.

Who to contact for more information: Mr Golding, Ms Alderson or Ms Brady





# Sample options form

Student name:	Family Group:
All students will be examined in Mathematics, English Lo Science and RS. All students will also have core PE and	
Please select three choices from the list below in order two reserve choices (4, 5). You must choose at least on one of your three choices – you can choose more than are unable to offer you one or more of your top three	e of the subjects in <b>bold</b> as none of these subjects. If we choices for any reason, then
we will try to ensure that you are offered one of your re	serve subjects.
Art: Art, Craft and Design	
Art: Textile Design	
Computing Science	
Design and Technology	
Drama	
Food Preparation and Nutrition	
French	
Geography	
History	
Music	
Sociology	
Spanish Triple Sciences	
Triple Sciences	
Alternatives to GCSEs  BTEC in Digital Information Technology Level 1/2	
Hospitality and Catering BTEC Level 1/2	
BTEC Sport Level 1/2	
Additional English and Maths	
7 (8 (8 (1 / 1 / 1 / 1 / 1 / 1 / 1 / 1 / 1 / 1	
Student's signature:	
Parent/carer's name:	
Parent/carer's signature:	
This Options Form must be returned to your family to	

St Mary Magdalene GCSE Options 2020-2022

