WEST BUCKLAND
SCHOOL

GCSE Curriculum

For courses starting September 2024

Contents

The Curriculum Years 10 and 11

The curriculum that has been studied at Key Stage 3, the first three years in the senior school, has been designed to form a broad educational base on which to build.

An element of choice becomes important at this stage of education, with the opportunity for pupils to develop special strengths and interests. It is important at the same time to match the difficulty and workload to the individual's capacity. There will, therefore, need to be careful consideration of what is best for the pupil. In this process the views of many people will be important: subject teacher, tutor, Deputy Head Academic and Head of Middle School. They will be pleased to give you time and expertise to help you come to the right decision.

The main purpose of this prospectus is to set out the pattern of next year's curriculum and to establish some useful guidelines to assist the choice.

As you may know, the Government reformed the GCSE specifications, phasing in new courses from September 2015 onward. These revised GCSE specifications are now graded on a new, nine point scale.

Compulsory Subjects

Some of the curriculum in Year 10 and 11 is compulsory. This consists of:

- English: English Language and English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science: Biology, Chemistry and Physics are offered as separate sciences and as dual awards.

We endeavour to give the students as much choice as possible to match their strengths and interests. We would encourage students to select a modern foreign language (French and/or Spanish) and students thinking about a degree course or career in language should consider taking both for GCSE. With experience, we have found these new specifications to contain more content and be more demanding. In light of this, the school decided to revise the curriculum such that students will study a maximum of nine GCSE subjects enabling them to devote more time to those subjects chosen.

Please bear in mind the following points in coming to a decision:

- The pupil should be well motivated and interested in the subject.
- The subject is within the pupil's capabilities.
- Not to drop a subject that may later prove necessary as qualifications for entry to a career or higher education.
- Other things being equal, taking a broad range of subjects will keep more careers open.
- Avoid the influence of friends' choices and advice. What may be right for one is not right for all.
- Quality of grade is more important than quantity. For a few students, especially those heavily involved in extra-curricular activity, it might be better to take one fewer GCSE in order to keep a good work-life balance.

We shall try to meet individual choices as closely as possible, but sometimes an individual's choices may not fit the blocks we need to construct for timetabling, or there are insufficient numbers of students choosing the subject to make it viable.

Are You Choosing the Right Subject?

It is usual to study a subject for GCSE before continuing on to an A-level course. This is a necessary condition for science subjects and modern languages, although not necessary for A-level courses in the social sciences and arts. It is also possible that a subject not taken at GCSE could later affect a career route even though the subject might not at first sight seem related. The following examples are given as guidelines.

Chemistry remains a key science for many university courses including dentistry, dietetics, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, physiotherapy and veterinary science. Physics is required at least to GCSE level for courses in architecture, engineering and entry into the Royal and Merchant Navy, whilst biology is necessary for courses related to bio-sciences, nature conservancy, physiotherapy and zoology.

Geography is also a subject that is necessary or preferred for admission to a variety of courses. These include cartography, environmental careers, town and country planning, landscape architecture, marine studies and surveying. Design is necessary for town and country planning, whilst art is a preferred subject for architecture and cartography. Foreign languages are vital for working in Europe and desirable for a career in tourism or any company with international links.

The role of the school in guiding pupils

Through PHSE lessons, tthe KS3 co-ordinator, with the support of the Year 9 tutorial team, help support pupils in their decision making. The main topics for discussion and research are how the labour market is changing, the factors influencing subject choices, an assessment of the pupils' personal strengths and the main features and requirements of different careers and higher education courses. The Deputy Head Academic briefed the pupils about the GCSE choice process

The pupils will carry out much of this research themselves with individual support where necessary. The following websites are helpful when finding out information about different careers:

- National Careers Service - https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/
- icould - http://icould.com/watch-career-videos/
- Careersbox - http://www.careersbox.co.uk/

There are quite a few degree courses at university which require particular A-levels and sometimes even GCSEs. This may have an effect on pupils' decisions. A course search can be made on the UCAS website at http://search.ucas.com/ to find out this information.

People to consult

- Deputy Head Academic
  Mr Matt Brimson
  School Tel: 01598 760151
  Email: mtb@westbuckland.com

- Head of Middle School
  Mr Michael Burstow
  School Tel: 01598 760151
  Email: mb@westbuckland.com

- Subject Teacher

- Tutors

Art and Design

Examination Board: OCR
Specification: J171

The art and design course at West Buckland is concerned with the development of the processes involved in visual perception and aesthetic experience. Through a means of expression of ideas and visual communication, the course is designed to encourage the growth of imagination, sensitivity, observation and analytical skills. The course is made up of two components.

UNIT 1 (A110 – A117) Art and Design Portfolio
Candidates need to produce a portfolio of work for this unit that demonstrates a personal response to starting points which are set by centres. The portfolio will consist of a sustained project, theme or course of study. It may be presented in an appropriate format for the area of study, for example annotated sketchbooks, mounted sheets, maquettes, prototypes, scaled models or written work. The focus is on including work that shows exploration, research, acquisition of techniques and skills. Portfolios and a basic starter kit, which includes sketchbook, watercolours and brushes is made available to all students at a small charge. Candidates are given up to a maximum of 45 hours in which to complete their Controlled Assessment Portfolio.

UNIT 2 (A120 – A127) Set Task
Candidates select one question from an early release question paper to which they produce a personal response. Candidates will be given a period of time in which to plan and prepare as determined by the centre. Candidates will be given ten hours of controlled time in which to work on developing their ideas to outcomes; at least one of the timetabled sessions must last for a minimum of three hours.

In the first year of the GCSE course, students follow a structured programme based on coursework units that aim to fulfil the different objectives. Where appropriate the students will also learn something of the appreciation of art within the context of set projects. Through experimentation with various media we hope that the students will achieve a good understanding, become competent and acquire the confidence and skills to enable individuals to realise their creative intentions.

During the second year students are encouraged to develop their skills in more individual projects that might involve anything from painting and drawing to work in graphic, textile, photography and three-dimensional studies.

The course suits the well-motivated pupil, since in the second year a certain amount of independent study, under staff guidance, is necessary for the pupil to complete their portfolio submission which makes up 60% of the syllabus. Following the distribution of the examination paper in the spring term there is a trip to London. This is for all art students in yr 10, 11 and 13 and will expose them to modern and traditional art. There are opportunities for year 11 students to work in conjunction with the A level students

Success in this subject enables the student to pursue the study of art and design at A-level. These subjects can lead on to study in many areas at colleges of art and design or university including: architecture, fine art illustration, photography, media studies, textile design, fashion, interior design, 3D design, history of art, and archaeology.

Mrs A Morrison

Business

Examination Board: EDEXCEL
Specification: 1BSO

Why Business?

Businesses operate in fast changing environments, and, of course, business activity affects us all, whether as consumers, employees, shareholders or citizens. By studying GCSE Business students will gain an appreciation of the issues facing UK businesses and global businesses in the 21st century. They will explore how they are organised, financed and operated and understand the political, economic, social and technological factors which influence them. Students will investigate how different types of businesses are set up. The Pearson course places particular emphasis on the small business and the role of the entrepreneurs. How is it, for example, that housewife Julie Deane could start the Cambridge Satchel Company in 2008 with just £600 and grow it to a £13 million business in just five years?

Students will discover how businesses recruit, reward and motivate their workers; and how they market their products to their customers. They will develop an understanding of the choices available to them when producing their products and how they can use financial information in their decision-making. The course is made up of two themes and exams are correspond to these themes.

Students need to relate their learning to what is happening in the world of business and be prepared to use the knowledge gained from watching the news or reading newspapers to discuss contemporary business topics with other students. Through their studies, students not only learn about business concepts and techniques but also apply and enhance related skills such as numeracy and enquiry.

Careers

Beside the transferable skills referred to above, studying GCSE Business will offer insights that are particularly relevant to careers such as management, marketing, banking, fund management and accountancy. It is clearly a platform for taking the subject at A Level, and introduces some concepts used in A Level economics.

Whatever career you end up in Business will be relevant in some way. There is a distinct possibility that you will either work for someone or for yourself.

The content of the course

Theme 1 - Investigating Small Business What makes someone a successful business person, how to develop an idea and spot an opportunity, and turn that into a successful business.
Theme 2 - Building a Business How to make a business stand out in a competitive marketplace. Financial decision-making and the complexity of dealing with staff. Environmental, social and ethical issues.

Assessment

There will be two 90-minute exam papers, each relate to the two themes. These papers will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short answer and extended-writing questions.

Mr J Wilson

Computer Science

Examination Board: OCR
Specification: J277

Why Would I Want To Study Computing?

Many jobs that today's students will have in 10 to 20 years have not yet been invented, but it is predicted that 90 per cent of jobs in the future will require some form of digital and computing knowledge. It is therefore important that professionals in every discipline – from art and entertainment, to communications and health care, to factory workers, small business owners, and retail store staff – need to understand computing to be globally competitive in their fields.

Computing students learn logical reasoning, algorithmic thinking, design and structured problem solving – all concepts and skills that are valuable well beyond the computing classroom. Students gain awareness of the resources required to implement and deploy a solution and how to deal with real-world and business constraints. These skills are applicable in many contexts, from science and engineering to the humanities and business, and have already led to deeper understanding in many areas.

What skills will I need?

You must be good at maths, have a strong logical mind and an interest in programming to do this course.

Assessment

Unit 01 – Computer systems:
1hr 30min written paper – 50%

This unit covers the following topics: Systems architecture, Memory, Storage, Networks, System security, Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns.

The question paper will consist of short and medium answer questions. There will also be one 8-mark extended response question. This question will enable students to demonstrate the ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning.

Unit 02 – Computational thinking, algorithms and programming:
1hr 30min written paper – 50%

The question paper is in two sections:

Section A assesses students' knowledge and understanding of concepts of Computer Science. Students then apply these to problems in computational terms, where they may use an algorithmic approach.

Section B assesses students' Practical Programming skills and their ability to design, write, test and refine programs. The question paper will consist of short and medium answer questions.

Mr P H Davies

Design and Technology

Examination Board: CIE
Specification: 0979

Why choose Cambridge IGCSE Design and Technology at West Buckland?

The Cambridge IGCSE Design and Technology syllabus enables leaners to identify, consider and solve problems through creative thinking, planning and design, and by working with different media, materials and tools. West Buckland has enviable facilities and candidates opting for this IGCSE will have the opportunity to use a vast range of traditional and modern processes.

Candidates gain technical and design awareness as a result, and develop skills such as initiative, resourcefulness, enquiry and ingenuity. They also develop the communication skills central to design making and evaluation.

The Cambridge IGCSE Design and Technology provides an ideal basis for further study and prepares learners for their future within a rapidly changing technological society. The structure and content of the specification links into the AQA Product Design A-Level offered by West Buckland.

Assessment at a glance

This course is made up of three components with two written papers and a coursework element as detailed below.

Exam Components

Candidates take:
Paper 1: Product Design (1hr 15 mins) This is a compulsory written paper. It tests design thinking. 50 marks (externally marked). Weighting 25%.

Paper 3: Resistant materials (1hr) This is a written paper which consists of a series of questions relating to the designing and making of products. Candidates have the option of selecting questions which best suit their strengths. 50 marks (externally marked). Weighting 25%.

Paper 5 Project (Practical/folio) The project is compulsory and is a school-based assessment. 100 marks (Internally marked/externally moderated). Weighting 50%.

Content of Components

Paper 1: Product design
This compulsory question paper tests 'Part 1' of the syllabus 'The design process'. Candidates answer one of three open-ended questions which assess their design abilities. Candidates will be required to complete a pre-printed response sheet that sets out specific space for each element of the question they choose.

Paper 3: Resistant Materials
This papers tests knowledge of aspects of 'Part 1 'as well as a more in depth look at materials and processes. The paper has a Section A and a Section B. Section A consists of compulsory questions. Section B consists of longer structured questions which candidates may choose from.

Paper 5: Project
A single design-and-make activity which can be selected by the candidate, consisting of the development of a made outcome and a concise design folder and/or appropriate ICT evidence.

The design folder should consist of approximately:
- 20 pages of A3 design work or the equivalent in A4
- Work can be produced by traditional methods or by using ICT

It is expected that students should spend approximately 45 hours on this activity.

As part of the evidence submitted, students should include photographs of the finished products as well as photographs at various stages of the process.

Mr W D Minns

Drama

Examination Board: AQA
Specification: 8261

Drama is a fantastic subject for anyone with an intelligent interest in life and a spark of creativity. It develops not only personal talent and the technical ability to devise and perform drama, but also confidence, social skills and self-discipline. Teaching takes place largely through practical lessons effectively involving skills training, group work and problem solving. For these reasons, Drama is highly valued in just about any profession involving personal interaction, from human resource management, to advertising, to counselling, law, medicine, teaching and therapy work. It is also jolly good fun, which you sometimes need during the pressured years of GCSEs!

Most pupils choose to be examined for their performance skills; however, pupils with a particular interest in the technical side of the subject (e.g. lighting) are able to be examined in this. Although the focus is primarily on acting skills, a limited amount of lesson time is spent on lighting, sound, set design, costume and make up.

General: Pupils require a good level of self-discipline and maturity. They will also learn to analyse their own performances and those of others, in depth, in writing and orally, using correct drama terminology. This builds on work done at KS3.

The curriculum is 70% written work and 30% performance, so students must have a good command of both spoken and written English to access the top grades.

A Written Exam 40%

Year 11 May/June

a Short questions on theatre terminology.
b Questions on an extract from a studied play discussing performance of it.
c One question on a live performance seen.

B Performance Exams 60%

a Devised performance (20 marks with portfolio explaining the process of creating it. (60 marks) 40%.
b Performance of two extracts from a text different from the examined play text. This will involve performing potentially solo, as a pair or as group. (40 marks) 20%

Please note: GCSE Drama can involve a commitment during unsocial hours! Sunday/evening rehearsals are offered in the weeks leading up to the externally examined performances and there are evening visits to live theatre productions in order to broaden experience and provide material to analyse in the written exam.

There is also a cost implication for theatre trips; permission is always sought in advance in such instances, but the more live theatre a pupil can see the better and it is wonderful if students can see productions with their families as well.

Ms R Hurstwaite

English as an Additional Language

Examination Board: CIE
Specification: 0991

The ability to use English confidently, accurately and with precision is essential for academic success in all subjects at GCSE, A-level and beyond. Whatever a student's future areas of study or employment, English language will be key and ensuring a strong foundation will be of long-term benefit.

Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language offers learners the opportunity to gain lifelong skills and knowledge and the aims are to:

- develop learners' ability to use English effectively for the purpose of practical communication
- form a solid foundation for the skills required for further study or employment using the medium of English
- develop learners' awareness of the nature of language and language-learning skills
- promote learners' personal development

Over the course of the programme, the students cover a wide range of topic areas. Through these and associated reading and listening activities, the students consolidate and build up their grammatical knowledge, widen their vocabulary and develop their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

The lang and language skills learnt and developed during the IGCSE course provide a platform for both Sixth Form study and the IELTS exam, which students take in Year 12/13 and which is essential for university entry.

Assessment

Reading and writing

- 2 hour paper
- 60% of total marks
- Students complete six exercises testing a range of reading and writing skills

Listening

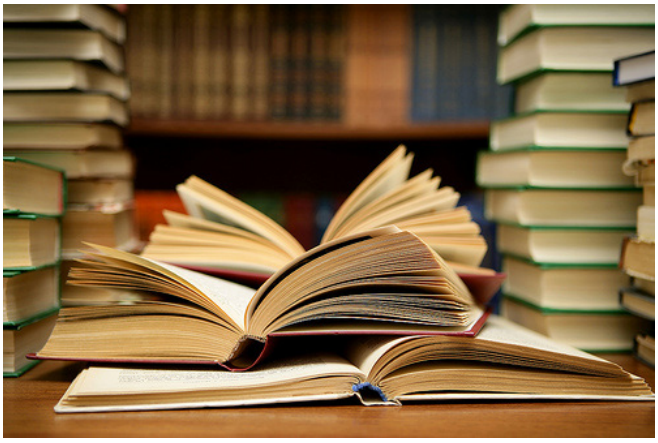
- 50 minutes (approximately)
- 20% of total marks
- Students listen to several short extracts and longer texts
- Quaestion types include: short-answer questions, gap-filling, matching, multiple choice and note-making

Speaking

- 10-15 minutes
- 20% of total marks
- The exam comprises a 2 to 3 minute warm up conversation followed by a 6 to 9 minute discussion with the examiner on a given topic.

Mr A McCombe

English Language



Examination Board: AQA
Specification: 8700

With the exception of a very few students whose first language is not English, all pupils take English Language and English Literature leading to two GCSEs. Currently, pupils are set according to their work and exam results in Year 9 and on the advice of their English teachers. As one of the mandatory requirements for entry into courses in further and higher education, and as a qualification increasingly demanded by employers, English Language GCSE is a key subject.

For GCSE English Language students should:

- read fluently, and with good understanding, a wide range of texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, including literature and literary non-fiction as well as other writing such as reviews and journalism
- read and evaluate texts critically and make comparisons between texts
- summarise and synthesise information or ideas from texts
- use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing
- write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately
- use grammar correctly and punctuate and spell accurately
- acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- listen to and understand spoken language and use spoken Standard English effectively.

English Language is assessed through two terminal examinations. For the award of the GCSE in English Language students must offer all three assessments.

Explorations in creative reading and writing:
The aim of this paper is to engage students in a creative text and inspire them to write creatively themselves by:

- in section A, reading a literature fiction text in order to consider how established writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to capture the interest of readers
- in section B, writing their own creative text, inspired by the topic that they have responded to in section A to demonstrate their narrative and descriptive skills in response to a written prompt, scenario or visual image.

Writers' viewpoints and perspectives:
The aim of this paper is to develop students' insights into how writers have particular viewpoints and perspectives on issues or themes that are important to the way we think and live our lives. It will encourage students to demonstrate their skills by:

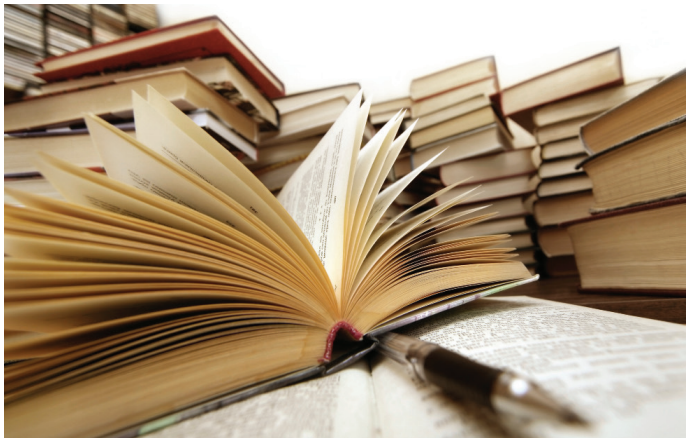
- in section A, reading two linked sources from different time periods and genres in order to consider how each presents a perspective or viewpoint to influence the reader
- in section B, producing a written text to a specified audience, purpose and form in which they give their own perspective on the theme that has been introduced to them in section A.

Non-exam assessment:
The aim of the assessment is to allow students to demonstrate their speaking and listening skills by:

- giving a presentation in a formal context
- responding appropriately to questions and to feedback, asking questions themselves to elicit clarification
- using spoken Standard English.

Mr A McCombe

English Literature



Examination Board: AQA
Specification: 8702

English Literature encourages students to develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking. Through literature, students have a chance to develop culturally and acquire knowledge of the best that has been thought and written. Studying GCSE English Literature should encourage students to read widely for pleasure, and as a preparation for studying literature at a higher level.

English Literature is assessed through two terminal examinations. All assessments are closed book: any stimulus materials required will be provided as part of the assessment. All assessments are compulsory.

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th century novel
How it is assessed:
- written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 64 marks
- 40% of GCSE

Questions

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
How it is assessed:
- written exam: 2 hour 15 minutes
- 96 marks
- 60% of GCSE

Questions

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.

Mr A McCombe

Geography

Examination Board: OCR
Specification: J383

Why Geography?
"Geography is not only up-to-date and relevant, it is one of the most exciting, adventurous and valuable subjects to study today. So many of the world's current problems boil down to geography, and need the geographers of the future to help us understand them" (Michael Palin CBE).

Geographers are attractive to a wide range of employers because of their awareness and understanding of the world around them, their ability to think deeply about the past, present and future and a range of important skills. As well as being highly literate and numerate, geographers can use ICT in a range of ways, devise fieldwork investigations, collect, present, interpret and analyse data, create and interpret a variety of maps, complete independent research and make reasoned decisions on difficult issues. You will find geographers working in a wide range of jobs, including the City, the Environment Agency, travel and tourism, international charities, retail and the armed forces.

Geography is an exciting and relevant subject. It inspires pupils so that they make more sense of the physical and human worlds and ways in which they interact and to have a greater understanding of many of the geographical issues in the news, such as population growth, development, urbanisation, threats to coral reefs, climate change and extreme weather. The course achieves an even balance of physical and human geography and appeals to many different types of learners. Geographers complete the course with a clearer understanding of their place in both the UK and the wider world and their outlook is increased with case studies drawn from around the UK and countries such as Kenya, Brazil, India and Australia.

The content of the course

Pupils study the following topics in geography at GCSE:
Landscapes of the UK – river and coastal landscapes
UK environmental challenges – flooding, farming, energy
People of the UK – development, population, city challenges
People of the Planet – development, aid and city challenges in the developing world
Ecosystems of the Planet – tropical rainforests and coral reefs
Environmental threats to our Planet – climate change, hurricanes, drought, El Niño

Geographical Skills (eg fieldwork, atlas maps, OS maps, graphs, photographs and satellite images)

Assessment

Living in the UK Today This exam is 1 hour in length, is taken in the June of Year 11 and represents 30% of the assessment. There are opportunities for short responses and extended writing.

The World Around Us This exam is 1 hour in length, is taken in the June of Year 11 and represents 30% of the assessment. There are opportunities for short responses and extended writing.

Geographical Skills This 1½ hour-long exam represents 40% of the assessment. It is assessed by an examination in the June of Year 11 on a range of skills, including fieldwork and the ability to think like a geographer.

Miss R L Wadey

Global Perspectives

Examination Board: Cambridge IGCSE
Specification: 0457

Cambridge iGCSE Global Perspectives encourages learners to think about and explore solutions to significant global issues.

The syllabus develops learners' ability to consider significant global issues from different perspectives. Moreover, it encourages learners to work collaboratively and individually and to apply their knowledge in different contexts.

Global Perspectives develops transferable skills to complement learning in other curricular areas. While there is a single written exam the majority of the award is graded upon submission of coursework in the form of an individual report and a team project. Global Perspectives is unlike most other GCSE courses in so far as you can choose upon advice what to focus on. There is no specific course content to learn and memorise although there is a topic list (see below). Instead, there are skills and attributes for you to develop. Students can choose up to four topics.
Some of the topics to choose from are listed below:

- Arts in society
- Conflict and peace
- Digital world Education for all
- Globalisation
- Health and wellbeing
- Law and criminality
- Media and communication
- Migration and urbanisation
- Political power and action
- Poverty and inequality
- Social identity and inclusion
- Sport and recreation
- Technology, industry and innovation
- Values and beliefs

Mr M T Brimson

History

Examination Board: EDEXCEL
Specification: 4HI1

Why should you study history?

"Study history very carefully. Learn precisely what happened and what did not. This will help you understand what is about to happen in the world." – Jim Rogers, billionaire, American investor and author.

How can anyone understand the world today without a solid knowledge and understanding of history? Crises in the Ukraine, the Middle East, Afghanistan? Their origins are all traced back to previous historical events. Without history one will be condemned to walk through life in a fog. It will simply be impossible to make sense of the world around you. Perhaps just as importantly, history gives us vital clues as to where we are heading in the future. As Mark Twain said, "History does not repeat itself, but it rhymes." Before the Second World War, Britain was the most powerful country in the world. Yet six years later, Britain was economically exhausted and was overtaken by the United States. Is America now facing the same fate having spent trillions of dollars fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan? During the last 3000 years China has, at various times, been the most advanced and richest country on the planet. Has China's time come again?

The subjects on offer are another reason why you should study history at GCSE. We study modern European and world history, much of which builds upon what pupils learnt in Year 9. Specifically, we examine Tsarist and Communist Russia, the Cold War and China. With regards to the latter topic, we explore the fall of the Qing dynasty, the Chinese Civil War and Maoist China.

Finally, history also helps you develop a host of abilities that any employer will value. For instance, examining data, making intelligent arguments, cross-referencing information and writing cogently are skills fostered at GCSE. You can take these skills into law, government, finance, journalism and many other career paths.

What Will My GCSE History Studies Involve?
There is no controlled assessment component at GCSE. Instead, there are two examinations that are each worth 50% of the overall grade.

Paper One
This paper is 1½ hours in duration and makes up 50% of the final grade. Two topics are covered: Stalin's Russia, 1924 – 53 and Cold War relations, 1943 – 72.

Paper Two
This paper is 1½ hours in duration and makes up 50% of the final grade. Two topics are covered: Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905–24 and China: Conflict, Crisis and Change, 1900-89.

Dr J McKerrow

Mathematics

Examination Board: EDEXCEL
Specification: 1MA1

Mathematics is a core subject within our GCSE curriculum.

Our GCSE Mathematics course encourages students to:

- develop confidence in mathematics
- have a positive attitude towards mathematics
- become fluent mathematical thinkers
- implement problem solving strategies
- prepare for future mathematical studies

We aim to:

- develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
- acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions
- comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

Overview of assessment

There are three written papers, each contributing equally towards the final grade. Paper 1 is a non-calculator paper, whilst Paper 2 and Paper 3 are based upon students having use of a calculator.

These papers are entered at either Foundation or Higher Tier. A student taking Foundation Tier can be awarded a grade in the range (1-5), whilst Higher Tier grades are (4-9).

Our students are taught in classes with others of similar ability based upon prior assessment performance. These groups are subject to review during, and particularly at the end of Year 10, to ensure all students are given the best opportunity to succeed. Students in the lowest set can expect to be entered for the Foundation Tier and all other sets will take the Higher Tier in the summer of Year 11.

A small number of students will be selected to study:

Examination board: OCR
Additional Mathematics (FSMQ)
Specification: 6993

This course provides candidates with an introduction to the mathematics studied in AS and A-level GCE modules. It is designed for those students who have a thorough knowledge of the content of the Higher Tier of the National Curriculum for Mathematics.

Ms M Scott

Modern Foreign Languages

French and Spanish

Examination Board: AQA
Specification: 8658 French
8698 Spanish

It is a common misconception that everyone speaks English. According to the CIA World Fact Book, only 5.6% of the world's population speaks English as their first language. In addition, a recent All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modern Languages estimated the UK alone loses £50 billion a year in lost contracts due to an absence of employee language skills. Therefore, the ability to speak a foreign language will open doors for you in today's highly competitive jobs market.

Almost all pupils at West Buckland study either French or Spanish; indeed, many choose to continue both their languages to GCSE. We do our best to ensure that pupils are placed in the set that suits them best. There are usually two sets for each language.

In preparation for the GCSE, Year 10 and 11 pupils continue to practise the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), progressing with the courses they have used hitherto, supplemented by other material. The GCSE requires pupils to be tested in all four skills and the papers they will sit at the end of their course are each worth 25% of the total. Pupils have the option of either taking foundation or higher level papers, and their teacher will advise them which would be more appropriate.

It is hoped that any pupil who has not been to France or Spain in Years 7-9 will have this opportunity in Years 10 or 11. In recent years, for example, Spanish pupils have had the chance to participate in a non- reciprocal home stay in Murcia and there are plans for a similar trip to northern France. Since there is no substitute for spending time in the country itself, we strongly recommend as many pupils as possible take part in the trips offered to them, to experience at first hand the cultures and languages being studied.

Mr J Murphy

Music

Examination Board: EDUQAS
Specification: 601/8131/X

The GCSE specification offered by EDUQAS is both varied and challenging and is designed to inspire and encourage young musicians with their music making and composing. GCSE music is particularly attractive because:

1. It rewards pupils for performance and participation. A pupil who takes an active part within the musical life of the school through the many bands, choirs and orchestras will be able to include this valued extra-curricular activity in their GCSE coursework and gain credit for something they would already be doing.
2. The compositional aspect of the course is a healthy mix of traditional techniques (to give a good foundation in the fundamental laws of harmony) and free composition, which allows pupils to explore their own expressive voice. Topics of composition can be in a traditional style (classical string quartets, romantic piano piece, baroque vocal music for example) or more modern/popular styles (eg music theatre, pop song, jazz, Minimalism).
3. The historical aspect of the course allows study of the main styles in Classical music:

- **Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices**

Many forms and devices used by composers today have their origin in the Western Classical Tradition. This area of study includes one set work: "Badinerie" by J.S.Bach for Flute and String Orchestra with Harpsichord.

- **Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble**

Through a study of diverse musical styles composed for ensemble, such as jazz and blues, musical theatre and chamber music, pupils will consider how music is composed for small groups

- **Area of study 3: Film Music**

There are many areas of specialism for musicians within the film industry such as composer, orchestrator, arranger, performer, music editor, producer and more. A film composer scores music to accompany a motion picture for film or television. This includes dramatic underscore and thematic music as well as popular songwriting.

- **Area of study 4: Popular Music**

The popular music industry offers a wide range of opportunities for both composers and performers, including singer, song-writer, music producer, arranger and more. This area of study includes one set work: "Africa" by Toto.

Pupils will also study a variety of associated pieces to broaden their music palette. The understanding of these topics and their far reaching implications to a performing musician are vital to their overall development as a rounded musician.

The GCSE music course is an absolute must for those who enjoy their music making and want to further their understanding and enjoyment of this fascinating and ancient subject.

A practical ability of Grade 4 by the end of Year 11 is necessary to attain the higher grades.

What do the pupils say about GCSE music?

'My chance to be really creative and enjoy myself'

'Learn about your hidden talents.'

'Great fun in a relaxed and inspiring environment. Amazing!'

Mr N Smith

Physical Education

Examination Board: OCR
Specification: J812

Overview:
OCR's Cambridge National in Sports Science course is designed to engage pupils through its interesting learning content whilst inspiring them to develop real-world skills to prepare them for the future. The varied and well regarded theory content means the course provides a route to Further Education awards such as A-levels, Cambridge Technical, and to Higher Education in Sports Science and Physical Education for example.

Content and Assessment:
This sport qualification offers learners the chance to develop different types of skills such as; communication, problem solving, team working, evaluation and analysis. These are all transferable skills which can be learned and assessed through this qualification and utilised in many other educational and employment settings. This qualification enables learners to:

- Develop a range of skills through involvement in sport and physical activity in different contexts and roles.
- Develop their ability to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations.
- Gain a better understanding of the complexity of different areas of sport and the sports industry.
- Increase their awareness of different ways to stay involved in sport and physical activity and of different careers and roles within sport.

The pupil's theoretical knowledge is assessed at the end of the two year course by a 1 hour, 60-mark exam on reducing the risk of sports injuries and dealing with common medical conditions. The style of the question paper includes a mixture of multiple choice questions, some structured questions, and extended written answer questions. Pupils will also be assessed in three coursework units which will be internally assessed and externally moderated. These three units will be selected from the choice given by the examining board, which include:

- The Principles of Training
- Sports Nutrition
- Technology in Sport
- Body Systems

Summary:
The highly motivated and enthusiastic performer will have much to gain from the subject and attaining a qualification in the Cambridge National in Sport Science. Pupils will have the opportunity to follow many different career paths, from physiotherapy, to sports nutrition, teaching, elite coaching, sports development management or professional athlete.

Mr R Holman

The Sciences

Examination Board & Specifications:

Biology	**AQA**	**8461**
Chemistry	**AQA**	**8462**
Physics	**AQA**	**8463**

Science

Science is a set of ideas about the material world. The GCSE specifications include all the parts of what good science is: whether it be investigating, observing, experimenting or testing out ideas and thinking about them. This will involve talking about, reading and writing about science plus the actual doing, as well as representing science in its many forms both mathematically and visually through models.

Science teaches many valuable skills which include critical thinking; analytical and deductive skills, experimental design, the idea of the fair test and evaluative skills. In addition, an appreciation of scientific ideas, claims and their technological and environmental applications is developed.

The majority of students are strongly recommended to take at least two sciences through to GCSE. A very small number of students may prefer to take one science only, in which case their option selection should be discussed with the Deputy Head Academic to ensure that it is educationally sound.

In particular, any pupil who has a possible interest in a career in medicine or veterinary science must take all three sciences to GCSE. Physics and mathematics provide the essentials for most fields of engineering and technology although a good foundation in chemistry is highly desirable for engineers and as a support for physics A-level.

Whilst biology alone may be a step to a career in health related professions and agriculture the support of chemistry is again desirable at all levels.

At West Buckland we have chosen to follow the specifications produced by AQA. All option sets will be taught the complete specification and prepared for the Higher Level tests. Individuals may take the alternative Foundation Level papers.

Biology

This is an exciting subject and particularly relevant today. In addition to the important skills taught, biology gives a thorough grounding in many issues that the student is likely to meet in our increasingly scientific world. The course is designed to give students understanding of more traditional biology whilst taking in newer areas of study such as cloning, genetic modification, and human disease.

The GCSE biology course covers areas such as these:

- Cell biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance, variation and evolution
- Ecology

This content above, along with an understanding of working scientifically and mathematical skills will be assessed in two examinations of one hour and forty-five minutes that will include: multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions. Questions in the written exams will draw on the knowledge and understanding students have gained by carrying out specific practical activities. These questions will count for at least 15% of the overall marks for the qualification.

Chemistry

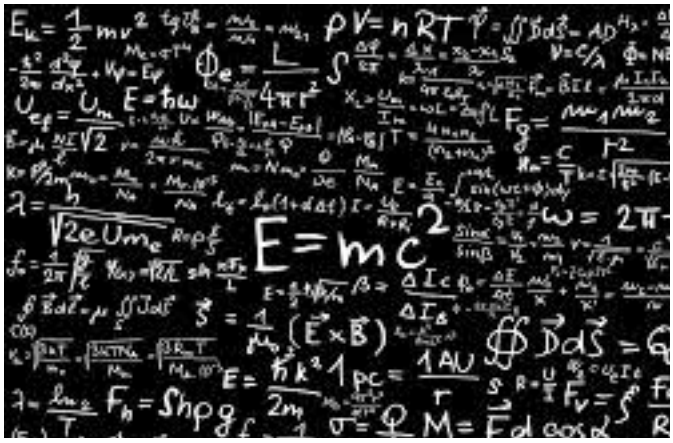
Chemistry is the study of all materials: their chemical properties, their interactions with others, and the various ways of creating these substances. At GCSE this involves covering aspects of the science which are designed to equip typical Year 11 students with a grounding in relevant areas of chemistry in order that they will have a good understanding of the world around them. GCSE chemistry will also be a springboard for further studies in areas including: physical sciences, geological sciences, engineering, environmental sciences, biological sciences, medicine, dentistry, nutrition, and veterinary science.

The topics covered at GCSE include:

- Atomic structure and the periodic table
- Bonding, structure and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes
- The rate and extent of chemical change
- Reactions of alkenes and alcohols
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of the atmosphere
- Using resources

Wherever possible, a practical emphasis is placed on the study of these topics. This content above, along with an understanding of working scientifically and mathematical skills will be assessed in two examinations of one hour and forty-five minutes that will include: multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions. There is no assessed practical activity but questions in the written exams will draw on the knowledge and understanding students have gained by carrying out required practical activities.

Physics



Physics is the study of matter and energy and the use of that study to explain both natural phenomena and man-made devices. The subject is regarded as the fundamental branch of science because its principles form the foundation of all other aspects of science and technology.

For example, conservation of energy is a key principle of physics that forms a starting point in a wide range of fields from atomic bonding through radiotherapy to weather forecasting, whilst nearly all of modern technology has been created as a result of discoveries in physics.

At GCSE we study:

- Electric circuits, magnetism and electronics
- Light, waves and sound
- Force and motion, momentum and collisions
- Energy transfer and world energy resources
- Radioactivity and atomic structure
- Astronomy and the earth in the universe

In these topics we look at the working of a wide variety of devices ranging in size from the atom to the universe itself.

Whatever career you eventually choose to follow you, will almost certainly find the skills and knowledge of physics useful and a qualification in physics valuable.

Further Information from:

Mrs T Hill, Head of Chemistry
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Mr N Shawcross, Head of Biology
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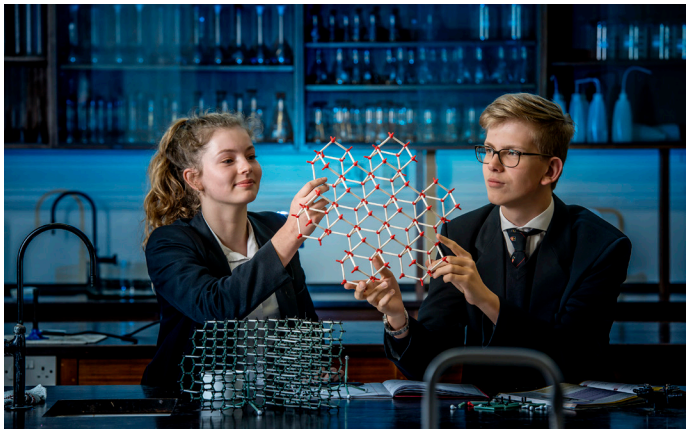
Mr J Freeman, Head of Physics
jef@westbuckland.com

Combined Science



Examination Board: CCEA
Specification: 1310

Single Award Science introduces key aspects of science and its methodology. It gives students an overview of topics such as cells, atomic structure and waves. Students will acquire knowledge and understanding of scientific facts, terminology, concepts, principles and practical techniques.

They will apply the principles and concepts of science to different contexts. They will learn how to evaluate scientific information and make judgements on the basis of this information. As a single award programme, it will provide students who complete it with a single GCSE even though three subjects have been combined within it.

This broad, practical course can help students appreciate the value of science while preparing them for related vocational studies or the world of work. It is particular helpful to those students who want to achieve a broad understanding of science without committing in depth to either Biology, Chemistry or Physics alone. The course will be taught by one teacher over five lessons within a fortnight. It would be especially helpful for those wishing to continue with Applied Science in the Sixth Form.

If you take Combined Science you cannot also take Biology, Chemistry or Physics.

This qualification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed through the science lessons that have been taught from Year 7 to Year 9.

Mr M T Brimson

Religious Studies

Examination Board: **AQA**
Specification: **8062MA**
Religious Studies A

Religious Studies is a rigorous academic subject that develops the critical evaluation and assessment of world views, encourages students to understand belief systems and ethical values and teaches them to develop arguments succinctly and accurately. All of these are transferable skills both for university and employment.

The GCSE Religious Studies course involves the study of the beliefs and practices of Christianity and Islam - both significant religions in the devlopment of Western thought - and a number of philosophical and ethical themes. These themes, many of which are directly relevant to the lives of students, include:

- Relationships and families
- Religion and ideas of life and death
- The existence of God and revelation
- Religion, peace and conflict
- Religion, human rights and social justice

The exam consists of two written papers, both 1 hour 45 minutes long.

For more information, please visit aqa.org.uk/8062

Mrs F Watteau

WEST BUCKLAND SCHOOL

Forward Thinking

For further information about the school or GCSE courses, please refer to the following:

Deputy Head Academic	Mr Matt Brimson 01598 760151 mtb@westbuckland.com
The Headmaster	Mr Phillip Stapleton

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