



The Kings of Wessex School

Dear Parents,

I am very pleased to publish this booklet which gives details of all the courses that your child will be studying over the coming year. We are committed to providing parents with information about the work of the school and hope that you find this booklet useful in supporting your child's education. As well as providing factual information about the content of courses it also gives suggestions about the ways in which you can help your child with their learning.

Our success as a school is based on an effective home/school partnership and this booklet aims to strengthen this still further. I hope that you find time to look through the booklet and that it provides a useful reference guide to your child's work throughout their first year at The Kings of Wessex School. If you have any suggestions or ideas about how the booklet could be improved in the future I would be delighted to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "B Marshall".

BARBARA MARSHALL
Deputy Headteacher

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BRIEF GUIDE TO THE CURRICULUM AT KINGS OF WESSEX

Which subjects do students have to study in Year 9?

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Design & Technology
- Information Technology
- A Modern Foreign Language
- Geography
- History
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education

In addition to the National Curriculum students must also study:

- Religious Education
- Sex Education
- Citizenship

Students also study Drama and Personal, Social and Health Education.

Year 9 at The Kings of Wessex follows a three year Key Stage 4 and in some of the core subjects students start studying for GCSE.

Students will still have some important decisions to make towards the end of Year 9 including the option to take some vocational subjects. Support and information concerning this will be given nearer the time.

How is each student's progress assessed?

The Kings of Wessex aims to give all students the opportunity to achieve their best within a broad and balanced curriculum.

Current attainment levels will be reported to parents termly through grade reviews.

For GCSE Subjects there will be assessed coursework and some modular examinations taking place during Year 9. An overview of these GCSE Subjects and anticipated examinations is shown on the table overleaf:

OVERVIEW OF CORE GCSE SUBJECTS STARTING IN YEAR 9

GCSE SUBJECT	YEAR 9	YEAR 10	YEAR 11
English	<i>From the Summer term of Year 9 students will start their GCSE course</i>	<i>Most written coursework will be completed during Year 10</i>	<i>Speaking and Listening will be assessed throughout Year 10 and Year 11 and Exams in the Summer of Year 11</i>
Maths	<i>Start of 3 year GCSE course</i>	<i>1st Module examination takes place in November of Year 10</i>	<i>Further details to follow</i>
Science	<i>Start of a 3 year GCSE course. First Modules take place in March and June of Year 9</i>	<i>Further details to follow</i>	<i>Further details to follow</i>
ICT	<i>Start of a 2 year Award in Digital Applications (AiDA) involving online e-portfolio of work which will be continually assessed in class</i>	<i>Continuation of online e-portfolio of work which will be assessed to provide final AiDA mark.</i>	
RE	<i>Start of 3 year GCSE course</i>	<i>1st Examination in the Summer of Year 10</i>	<i>2nd Examination in Summer of Year 11</i>
D&T – Product Design OR	<i>Start of 2 year GCSE course with the first examination in Summer of Year 9</i>	<i>Assessed Coursework and second (final) examination takes place in Year 10</i>	
D&T – Food Technology	<i>Start of 2 year GCSE course with coursework counting 30% towards GCSE</i>	<i>Examinations in January & June of Year 10 plus further assessed coursework</i>	

GCSE ENGLISH (Specification to be confirmed)

What are the aims of the course?

- To develop students' ability to communicate orally in a variety of situations.
- To encourage students to become critical readers of a range of texts.
- To develop students' ability to write accurately, interestingly and appropriately in different forms, for different purposes and for different audiences.

What is the content of the course?

Students will study four core units during the Autumn and Spring term which cover the different skills and content required by the National Curriculum:

- Introductory Unit: 'Murder at Wessex Mansions'
- Imaginative Writing: Original Writing
- Shared Reading: Shakespeare play
- Literary Non-Fiction: Travel writing

During the Summer term of Year 9 students will start their GCSE English course. Further details will follow once the specifications have been published by the exam boards.

What will be assessed during the course?

During the course, students will be assessed on the three National Curriculum Attainment Targets:

- **Speaking and Listening**
Students will, through different activities, be given opportunities to demonstrate their ability to come up with good ideas, to argue, persuade, describe and analyse. Sometimes they will need to show that they can work with others in a group or a pair, and sometimes they will need to speak in front of the class.
- **Reading**
Students will be assessed on their ability to read and explore challenging texts, to extract information, to extract meaning beyond the literal, and to show understanding of how a writer presents ideas, characters and plot.
- **Writing**
Students will be assessed on the ways in which they adapt their writing for different purposes and audiences, their organisation of ideas into a range of paragraphs, sentence types and lengths; and on their ability to draft and proof read their written work. .

Assessment continues in the form of Teacher assessment as in years 7 and 8. Work in Y9 will count towards the National Curriculum Teacher Assessed Level for Key Stage 3. Once the GCSE course starts in the summer of 2010, work will be assessed according to GCSE marking criteria.

What homework will be set?

Homework is an essential part of the English course, and will be set each week. It may be research, reading, preparing talks, drafting written work or writing up assignments.

What opportunities are there for trips and visits?

When possible, students will watch a production of the drama text they have studied. Workshops on set texts are sometimes arranged in school.

How can you help your child?

- Read books, newspapers and magazines yourself and discuss your reading with them.
- Talk to them about the books, newspapers and other texts they read and encourage them to respond critically to them.
- Make a dictionary, spell checker and/or thesaurus available for them to use when doing written assignments.
- Encourage them to read through written assignments and to check them carefully for simple errors of presentation (spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, sentence structure, handwriting).
- Help them to understand the difference between fact and opinion.

GCSE MATHEMATICS (Specification to be confirmed)

What are the aims of the course?

- To maximise achievement in their GCSE.
- To equip students with the numerical skills and knowledge necessary for life and for the study of other subjects.
- To provide mental training in analysis, synthesis and logical thinking.
- To train students in developing strategies for solving problems, in their lives in and out of school.

What is the content of the course?

On entry to Kings of Wessex school your child will start a 3 year GCSE course. The precise content delivered to your child will depend upon their attainment in Middle Schools, and, as they progress, on their attainment in Year 9.

The emphasis of the teaching and learning during the three year GCSE will be:

- To develop the students' ability to understand and use a range of mathematical techniques and methods based around 4 broad and interconnected areas: Algebra, number, shape/measure and data handling/probability. This will include non-calculator arithmetic and mental work.
- To develop the students ability to solve problems and to apply their developing mathematical skills to real life problems

What will be assessed during the course?

Students will be assessed on:

- Their knowledge of Mathematical language and facts.
- Their ability to perform calculations and analysis, both with and without the aid of calculators and computers.
- Their ability to solve problems, using a range of Mathematical techniques.
- The ability to evaluate different methods and choose the appropriate mathematics for a particular situation.
- Their ability to write about, discuss, and draw conclusions from their Mathematical work.

- Their ability to arrive at generalisations, and to use general results in specific situations.

Assessment will be on-going throughout Year 9. The students will complete regular ‘mastery tests’ to monitor their progress through the course. The mastery tests will be set at the end of each piece of work will typically occur every 2 weeks and will be between 10-30 minutes in duration. The test will be marked in class to allow the students to have instant feedback and the results will be posted on the Kings Learning Platform (KLP) so that you and your child can identify and target areas that need improving. The first GCSE module will be sat in the November of Year 10.

What homework will be set?

Homework is an important part of your child’s maths education as it is used to provide reinforcement of ideas and practice of skills. Homework will be set in small amounts and frequently, giving the steady practice required. Two shorter pieces of homework or one large piece per week will be a typical frequency. Details of the homework including due dates, copies of homework and marks for completed homework will be available on the KLP to allow you and your child to track their progress.

How can you help your child?

- Encourage your child to use the large number of resources available on the KLP, these include; videos, online textbooks, details of course content, example exam papers including answers.
- Ensure your child has the following equipment and brings it with them to every maths lesson: Pen, pencil, ruler and **scientific calculator**. Some higher level topics are inaccessible without a calculator and half of your child’s GCSE will be calculator based. Your child’s progress and examination results will be adversely impacted if they do not have and understand how to use their scientific calculator.
- Ensure your child completes all homework and revises thoroughly for all internal tests and external examinations.
- Encourage them in activities which involve Mathematics and its application. This might include handling money, measuring ingredients in the kitchen, planning a family holiday, or using a computer spreadsheet, according to your situation.
- Encourage the use of simple mental arithmetic and ensure that they know their first 10 times tables. Don't be afraid to help with homework and encourage them to seek help from the Maths team if they cannot complete their homework
- Encourage your child to review their work, and to check that their answers are sensible, and their methods clear.

GCSE SCIENCE (AQA 4461)

What are the aims of the course?

- To extend students' knowledge and understanding of Biology, Chemistry and Physics in preparation for GCSE modular examinations in March and June 2010.
- To encourage students to ask questions about the world around them and to develop the skills of systematic, scientific enquiry.
- To encourage students to relate their scientific knowledge to familiar phenomena and to everyday technology so that they develop an understanding of the world around them.
- To give students the opportunity to carry out practical experiments so as to extend their scientific understanding and to develop their practical skills.

What is the content of the course?

All students will follow the core Science course from the AQA Sciences curriculum. At the end of Year 9 the most able students will be fast-tracked through Triple Science while the majority of students will follow a Double Science accreditation and a few students will be studying an Applied Science course with vocational elements.

Students will study aspects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics as part of the AQA Science A Specification. They will usually have a different teacher for each Science and be taught in a specialist laboratory. During Year 9, students will study:

- **Biology 1a (Human Biology) and Biology 1b (Evolution and Environment)**
Students will look at variation and genetics in humans and other organisms and look at theories of evolution. They will also investigate how our bodies work and how we remain healthy.
- **Chemistry 1a (Products from Rocks) and Chemistry 1b (Oils, Earth and Atmosphere)**
Students will look at the extraction of important materials from the Earth and at some important industrial processes. They will also study rocks and learn about the origin of the atmosphere.
- **Physics 1a (Energy and Electricity) and Physics 1b (Radiation and the Universe)**
Students will study a range of Physics topics building on work done at Middle Schools. They will look in detail at energy and the generation of electricity. They will also study radiation and the Solar System.

What will be assessed during the course?

Students will be assessed on:

- **Knowledge and Understanding**

Students will be assessed on their ability to recall scientific knowledge. They will be expected to use their scientific knowledge to explain everyday events.

➤ **Practical Skills**

Students will be assessed on their practical skills ability (PSA) throughout the course. They will also sit Investigative Skills Assignments (ISAs) on several occasions; these are “mini practical exams” which, together with the PSA contribute 25% to the GCSE.

➤ **Research and Communication**

Students will be assessed on how well they can use sources of information, such as books, videos or information technology, to research a topic. They will be asked to present their findings in a number of ways, through written reports, short presentations or by producing a poster. Assessment will be on-going throughout the course.

➤ **GCSE Objective tests**

Students will sit six multiple choice GCSE tests during the course, three in March and three in June. We will provide Revision Guides to help.

What homework will be set?

Homework will be set to extend and complement the work in school. Students may be asked to write a report of their experimental work, to answer questions based on the current topic to answer revision questions on Middle School work, or to carry out their own research.

What opportunities are there for trips and visits?

We take advantage of touring lectures or scientific events when possible. In recent years, Year 9 students have attended the Science events at Techniquet in Cardiff and have been given the opportunity to participate in environmental competitions. We have also hosted visiting speakers who have given demonstrations on topics as diverse as Animal antics and liquid nitrogen.

How can you help your child?

- There are always current affairs issues that involve Science. Encourage them to read about these in newspapers or watch them on T.V. programmes such as Horizon, Equinox and Brainiac.
- Take them to visit Science museums or Science-based institutions e.g. Techniquet in Cardiff, Hinkley Point Nuclear Power Station, Bristol Zoo, and the Naval Air Museum at Yeovilton.
- Help them to obtain the necessary material for research homework, perhaps by visiting local libraries.
- The most important thing is to encourage their interest and their natural curiosity.

GCSE DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY – *PRODUCT DESIGN* (AQA 4555)

What are the aims of the course?

The main aims of this course are to provide students with a creative opportunity to design and make quality products that can be manufactured in quantity. They will use paper, card, wood, metal, plastics, ceramics and textiles.

Students will acquire the following skills:

- Analysing and evaluating products and processes.
- Be capable of demonstrating designing and making techniques.
- Develop ideas and planning.
- Consider how past and present design and technology, relevant to designing and making context affects society.
- Recognise the moral, cultural and environmental issues inherent in design and technology affect society.
- Opportunity to manufacture with Computer Aided Design /Computer Aided Manufacture (CAD/CAM).

What is the content of the course?

The two main areas of content are designing and making:

Designing: Students will develop a better understanding of the design process and use computers and graphic techniques to present their design concepts.

Making: Students will learn about the skills, processes and knowledge of a wide range of materials, and to have the opportunity to manufacture to a high standard.

What will be assessed during the course?

Assessment in Y9 (Skills based GCSE course)

Students will be working towards their first examination which will take place in the Summer of 2010. Students will produce a variety of products using wood, metals and plastics as well as modelling materials.

Assessment in Y10

This focuses on coursework (60%) and an examination (40%). The coursework mark will come from a combination of a major design-and-make project, which will be carried out in Y10. The examination will assess the knowledge of designing and making students learn throughout the course. There will also be an opportunity to retake their examination from Y9 if necessary.

What homework will be set?

Homework is an integral part of the Product Design course. Students will be given tasks related to the work developing within school. They will produce a variety of outcomes, some will relate to specific skills and subject knowledge, and other pieces will be research or design orientated.

How can you help your child?

- Encourage them to enquire what materials everyday products are made from, and the manufacturing techniques that may have been used to produce them.
- Talk to your child about their design work and help them to evaluate their ideas with the aid of someone else's viewpoint.
- Encourage them to use reference materials to find out more information about unfamiliar techniques, processes and materials.

GCSE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY – *FOOD TECHNOLOGY* (OCR J302)

What are the aims of the course?

The main aims of this course are to provide students with the opportunity to:

- Design and make quality food products using a variety of ingredients and techniques.
- Develop designing and making skills.
- Understand how everyday food products are design and manufactured.
- Develop an understanding of food technology and manufacturing.

What is the content of the course?

The two main areas of content are designing and making:

Designing - students will develop a better understanding of the design process and learn how to use food creatively to meet different needs.

Making - students will learn about the skills, processes and knowledge of food in order to make quality products.

What will be assessed during the course?

Assessment in Y9

Students range of skills will work towards a design and make coursework task which will go towards their GCSE qualification (30%).

Assessment in Y10

An examined unit in January (20%) and a further examined unit in June (20%). The final 30% is coursework that is produced during Y10.

What homework will be set?

Homework is an integral part of the Food Technology course. Students will be given tasks related to the work developed within school. Students may be required to carry out research projects during the course. Part of homework will be the organisation of materials/resources for the practical lessons.

How can you help your child?

- Talk to your child about their designs and help them make decisions about the combination of materials of their new food products.
- Encourage them to enquire how familiar and unfamiliar food products are manufactured.
- Help them obtain research information for homework projects.
- Provide materials when required, approximately once a month.

**GCSE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY –
Award in Digital Applications (AiDA) (Edexcel AiDA D201)**

What are the aims of the course?

- To develop worked based ICT skills - communicating information via different media e.g. sound, video, text and graphics. To gain an Award in Digital Applications (AiDA) – equivalent to one GCSE qualification.
- To use different software packages and techniques to increase students' confidence in using computers in other areas of the curriculum, as well as ICT.
- To create and develop an online e-portfolio of work which will be used as the assessment for the Award in Digital Applications (AiDA) in Year 9 & 10
- To develop their skills in proof-reading and editing work in a critical way.
- To appreciate the value and scope of using ICT as a tool.

What is the content of the course?

The course involves the use of a variety of software packages, database, desktop publishing, spreadsheet, control and graphics. The use of the Internet and the creation of web pages are also covered. The topics that are studied include computer legislation, hardware, software, security and the social aspects of using computer systems.

The course also allows students to be able to use a variety of different methods to present their work, some of which are the use of video and sound.

What will be assessed during the course?

All their work will be assessed on-line and count towards the Award in Digital Applications (AiDA)

What homework will be set?

Homework is an integral part of the ICT course. Students will be given tasks related to the work developing within school as well as extension activities intended to introduce new topics or themes. Students may be required to carry out research tasks and will be encouraged to widen their theoretical knowledge of the subject.

There will always be homework based on the Award in Digital Applications (AiDA) every week after the first half term as this forms part of their final assessment.

How can you help your child?

- Encourage them to use computers for word-processing their work in all areas of the curriculum, so that presentation and error checking (especially spelling) can be improved.
- If there is a computer at home encourage them to use it other than for games!
- Discuss uses of computers in society as they observe them e.g. at the doctor's surgery, hospital, travel agents, library, cash point, on T.V.
- Help them to question the advantages and disadvantages of using computers – articles in newspapers can be useful, e.g. data protection, hacking, viruses etc.
- Discuss how computer produced publications target their audience and how they meet their purpose.

MODERN LANGUAGES – GCSE French (AQA 4658) / German (AQA 4668)

What are the aims of the course?

➤ Linguistic

To give students the confidence and competence to communicate with French and German native speakers in the four language skills areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

➤ Social

To increase the students' social competence by promoting an awareness of, and sensitivity to, differences in social customs and behaviour, so that they may enjoy meeting French and German people in this country and travel to French and German speaking countries equipped with an understanding of, and interest in, different cultures and lifestyles.

What is the content of the course?

When students embark on their Modern Language studies at the Kings of Wessex, they will start the first year of a three year course which could lead to a GCSE in French and/or German. Should they choose to continue French and/or German they will achieve a GCSE qualification at the end of Year 11 (two GCSE qualifications for dual linguists).

The four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing will be taught through the following contexts:

- Lifestyle
- Leisure
- Home and Environment
- Work and Education.

Students will be taught through the medium of the foreign language and will be expected to respond in that language whether it be orally, in writing, or in response to audio stimuli. Textbooks, magazines, audio and video material are used, and you are encouraged to develop your I.T. skills for homework and written assignments, as well as accessing appropriate websites for up-to-date news and information, as well as language practice. CD Roms offering practice in each of the language skills can be accessed via the school's Intranet. In addition the Faculty is building up a bank of resources on the school's Intranet.

What will be assessed during the course?

Students will be tested at least once each half-term in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, to assess the level at which they are working in each of these language skills. Expectations for the attainment of the majority of students at the end of Key Stage 3 in Modern Languages are different from all other subjects. During the course of Year 9 the average student would be

working at Level 4. The testing will be directly related to the topics outlined under 'Content of the Course'.

What homework will be set?

Homework is an integral part of the Modern Languages course. Students will be given tasks related to the work developed within school. Normally two learning and two written homework tasks will be set each fortnight for students studying one foreign language. Those studying both French and German will be set five, possibly six, homeworks during this period of time.

What opportunities are there for trips and visits?

Those students studying French, will be able to participate in the French Study trip to Brittany which takes place in the Autumn term when they are in Year 11. Students studying German, will be able to participate in the German Study trip to the Christmas Markets in Cologne or Munich. This is also likely to take place in the Autumn term when students are in Year 10 and/or Year 11. We also offer Year 10 and 11 students of both languages, the opportunity of taking part in Study Days organised by Philip Allan Updates at various venues in Bristol or Birmingham.

How can you help your child?

- Parents can foster a positive attitude towards Europe and counter prejudice by encouraging their children through their language learning to take an interest in Europe, and the part they can play in its development.
- A French-English, German-English dictionary is as vital an aid to Language study as a calculator is to Mathematics. Every student studying a language needs to have his/her own dictionary and to practise using it throughout Key Stage 3 and during Key Stage 4.
- Parents can encourage their children to have pen-friends in France and/or Germany to extend their use of language beyond class and homework assignments.
- Parents can encourage their children to access *at home* the many web sites used in their Modern languages lessons so that they can consolidate work done in lessons.
- If the opportunity lends itself, parents can encourage their children to use their language when on a family holiday to France or Germany or French/German speaking countries.
- Parents could take an active part in helping their children with learning homeworks by testing them on vocabulary and encouraging them to record conversations on tape at home. The acquisition of vocabulary is particularly important since dictionaries are not permitted in the GCSE examinations.

HISTORY

What are the aims of the course?

- To develop an understanding of the past and its effect upon the present.
- To encourage an understanding of cause and effect and change and continuity; how things have changed and how things have remained the same.
- To develop a range of historical skills including how to find out about the past from source material and how to ask, and find answers to, historical questions.
- To appreciate the thoughts, feelings and actions of people in the past and develop a tolerance of different opinions.

What is the content of the course?

Autumn Term:

Britain 1750 - circa 1900

- the Industrial Revolution-including a local study on Cholera in Bridgwater
- demands for political change

Spring and Summer Terms:

The Twentieth Century World

- the First World War and its consequences
- the Second World War and Holocaust
- the legacy of the Second World War for Britain and the world

What will be assessed during the course?

During the course students will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate understanding of:

Chronology

- They will need to know the dates of key events and be able to place these events in the order in which they happened.

The characteristic features of the periods studied

- e.g. the social impact of the Industrial Revolution and why the First and Second World wars were 'World' wars.

How historical events have been interpreted differently

- e.g. whether the tactics employed by the Generals in World War One were successful or not.

The skills of using and analysing historical evidence

- They will look at a range of historical sources e.g. letters, posters, films, and will analyse them by considering questions like: 'How useful are they as historical sources?' and 'How reliable are they?'

How to organise and communicate the results of their studies

- They will be given some opportunities throughout the year to choose how to organise and present their work.

Assessment will be on-going throughout the course, and at the end of the year, the teacher will use this to award the National Curriculum level for History which your child has attained.

What homework will be set?

Homework is an integral part of the History course and will be set fortnightly in a variety of forms, to include research, document work, reading, preparing a talk and written assignments. Students will be encouraged to do their own independent research in order to complete homework assignments.

What opportunities are there for trips and visits?

During the course of Year 9 students will be offered the opportunity to visit the Battlefields of World War One.

How can you help your child?

- Encourage them to watch current affairs TV programmes with you and relate them to past events.
- Encourage them to question and appreciate interpretation and bias in the way that current affairs are reported, e.g. The Sun versus The Independent!
- Watch historical dramas with them and discuss how authentic and useful they are as historical sources e.g. 'Pride & Prejudice' or 'Hope and Glory'.
- Take them to visit historical places and museums. Highly recommended are The Imperial War Museum in London, The Rural Life Museum in Glastonbury and The Black Country Museum in Dudley.
- Encourage them to talk to older friends and relatives about life in the past, particularly those who have lived through the Second World War.
- Help them to obtain the necessary material for research homework, or simply to encourage their interest.

GEOGRAPHY

What are the aims of the course?

- To increase understanding of processes at work within the natural environment and their effect on human activity.
- To value and understand the differences in peoples' way of life, beliefs and culture.
- To increase awareness of differences in living standards between and within countries.
- To recognise the impact of human activity on the environment and the need for sustainability.
- To raise students' awareness of the interdependence of nations.
- To increase students' knowledge of basic geographical facts.

What is the content of the course?

Autumn Term

- Dangerous World: a focus on key global issues and potential catastrophes
- Developed world: a focus on Japan

Spring Term

- Developing world: how do we measure development?
a focus on Kenya

Summer Term

- Flooding and it's Management : the water cycle and drainage basins
flooding and soil erosion: causes, effects and solutions

What will be assessed during the course?

Students will be assessed on:

Knowledge

- They will know the 'key facts' (e.g. places, natural features) of each country studied and be familiar with terms used in the Flooding unit.

Understanding of patterns

- They will demonstrate understanding of why certain patterns of human activity are found in particular places (e.g. population distribution, location of industries in Japan, trade and development issues in Kenya).

Understanding of processes and features

- They will explain how some natural environment processes work (e.g. global warming, tsunami, volcanoes, causes of flooding).

People-environment relationships

- They will recognise the links between natural environment processes and human patterns, and appreciate the way in which human activities can affect the environment (e.g. industry and pollution in Japan, desertification in Kenya). They will be introduced to issues of sustainability.

Skills

- They will continue to acquire and extend skills in mapping, diagrams and using ICT and annotated sketch maps.

Communication, organisation, presentation

- They will present work in a number of ways, including ICT and take increasing responsibility for organising their work.

Assessment will be based on regular assignments, including homework. A National Curriculum Level will be awarded for Geography in June.

What homework will be set?

Homework is an important part of the course and will involve a variety of tasks. Students will be expected to take responsibility for organisation and display initiative and effort. All students will be expected to complete some homework, usually lasting between 30 - 45 minutes per fortnight.

How can you help your child?

- Encourage them to develop an interest in other places.
- Talk to them about environmental issues and encourage them to take responsibility for their own environment.
- Help them to value other peoples' beliefs and develop a tolerance of different cultures and lifestyles.
- Encourage them to watch T.V. programmes about other countries and environmental issues.
- If they have access to a computer at home, consider downloading some good free 'geographical' software (e.g. Google Earth, National Geographic).

GCSE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (WJEC 4450/01)

What are the aims of the course?

This course aims to develop a knowledge and understanding of the key beliefs, values and traditions of two major religions. It also aims to give an opportunity to consider religious and other responses to moral issues and to fundamental questions of life.

- To allow students to adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion. To explore religions and beliefs, reflect on fundamental questions, engage with them intellectually and respond personally.
- Enhance their spiritual and moral development.
- Enhance their personal, social and cultural development, their understanding of different cultures locally, nationally and in the wider world, and to contribute to social and community cohesion
- Develop their interest in and enthusiasm for the study of religion, and relate it to the wider world.
- Reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in light of their learning.

What is the content of the course?

Religion and Life -

Looking for Meaning:	Issues about God, life and death
Relationships:	Issues of love, marriage and divorce
Our World:	Exploring creation and our place in the world
Is it fair?:	Issues of justice and equality

Religion and Human Experience -

Religion and Conflict:	Issues of peace, forgiveness and conflict
Religion and State/Authority:	Issues of law and order in religion and society
Religion and Expression:	Issues of expressing one's faith
Religion and Medicine:	Issues of medical ethics and the sanctity of life

What will be assessed during the course?

Students will be assessed on the two units:

Religion & Life:	3 pieces of work are assessed for each unit, one of which will include a full 'mock' GCSE exam question. The first GCSE exam will be sat in the Summer of Year 10 which counts 50% towards the full GCSE qualification.
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Religion & Human Experience: 3 pieces of work are assessed for each unit, one of which will include a full 'mock' GCSE exam question. The final exam will be sat in the Summer of Year 11 and counts as the final 50% of the total GCSE examination.

What homework will be set?

Homework will be set every fortnight and will include a variety of tasks. Sometimes it will involve some research, or the preparation of materials for a presentation. Sometimes it will be a reading or learning homework, and at other times, students are asked to discuss an issue, setting out their own views.

How can you help your child?

- Encourage them to have an open-minded attitude to religion and spiritual issues.
- Encourage them to take an interest in moral and religious issues as they arise in the news.
- Help them in finding material for research homework or for class presentations.
- Visit places of worship or sites of special religious interest, both locally and whilst on holiday.

ART

What is the aim of the course?

- To develop students' individual, practical, aesthetic and critical skills.

What is the content of the course?

Throughout the year students will complete three projects on given themes, with a similar structure to Art GCSE. The first half term of each theme will be spent critically analysing Artists, craftspeople and designers work and collating visual research, in the form of observational drawing, sketches in various materials and collecting resources. The latter half term students work on a final piece, demonstrating the skills they have learnt.

During the year all students follow a programme of study which will allow them to develop their artistic skills individually, but within the framework of the National Curriculum.

The following disciplines will be covered:

- Painting & Drawing.
- Sculpture.
- Printmaking.
- Textiles.
- Digital Photography, Photoshop.

An important part of the course is Critical and Contextual Studies. This area of study concentrates on the work of famous and influential artists of the past and present, and relates to the theme being undertaken.

What will be assessed during the course?

All work is marked according to Key Stage 3 attainment targets, this includes Homework.

What homework will be set?

Homework is set weekly, or may, under certain circumstances, cover a period of longer duration.

How can you help your child?

- Encourage them to watch Art, and Design related programmes on T.V.
- Encourage them to express opinions on Contemporary Art.
- Take them to Museums and Galleries, e.g. The Arnolfini Gallery in Bristol; Bristol Museum and Art Gallery; The Tate Gallery, London; The Royal West of England Academy, Bristol.
- Materials Required, to be brought to the first Lesson:
 - Sketch book
 - Pencils - HB, 2B, 4B
 - Rubber
 - Scissors
 - Selection of fine paint brushes
 - Glue StickThese should be brought to all Lessons.
- Encourage them to borrow Art Books from the local Library.
- Help them to keep a scrap book of photographs and illustrations related to the themes on which they will be working.
- Encourage them to Draw as much as possible

MUSIC

What are the aims of the course?

- To develop young people intellectually, creatively and socially through music.
- To develop the capacity to express and understand ideas and feelings through the medium of music.
- To develop an awareness of musical traditions and developments in a variety of cultures and societies.

What is the content of the course?

Students will focus on the three main musical activities of Composing, Listening and Performing, through a series of integrated units of work.

UNIT	ACTIVITY	TOPIC	FOCUS
1	Performing, Composing, Listening & Appraising	20 th Century Art Music	Minimalism, Experimentalism, Serialism & Aleatoric Music
2	Performing, Composing, Listening & Appraising	Sound & Image	Composing for Film, devices used
3	Performing, Composing, Listening & Appraising	Form & Structure	Binary, Ternary, Rondo, Arch and Theme & Variation Forms
4	Performing, Composing, Listening & Appraising	Song Writing	Composing Popular Song
5	Performing, Composing, Listening & Appraising	Musical Theatre	Performing Arts within Musical Theatre from 1950 – present day
6	Performing, Composing, Listening & Appraising	Musical ICT	Understanding software programs including Sibelius, Cubase & Musition

What will be assessed during the course?

During the course, students will be assessed on their ability to:

- Control sounds made by the voice and a variety of tuned and untuned instruments.
- Perform with others, and develop awareness of audience, venue and occasion.
- Compose in response to a variety of stimuli, and explore a range of resources.
- Listen to, and develop an understanding of, music from different times and places, applying this knowledge to their own work.

- Respond to, and evaluate live performances and recorded music, including their own and others' compositions and performances.

All three strands, Performing, Composing and Listening & Appraising, are assessed at the end of each half term.

What homework will be set?

Homework takes the form of learning material which is on the factsheet printed in students' exercise books. This is then applied to musical examples in class as a series of listening exercises which culminate in a listening test. A second homework task will be set from time to time in a variety of forms, to include: research, practice or listening to musical extracts drawn from recommended internet sites.

What opportunities are there for music-making?

In addition to classroom music making, there is an extra-curricular programme which currently includes the following: Big Band; Woodwind Ensemble; Brass Ensembles; String Orchestra; Percussion Ensemble; GCSE Coursework Club.

All students, including those who pursue their music only in class lessons, are encouraged to perform in assemblies, and at school services and concerts, giving them the invaluable opportunity to perform in an informal setting; thereby finding out exactly what performance is all about.

How can you help your child?

Encourage them to get involved with learning to play a musical instrument.

- Encourage those who already to seek out a musical group to join, or form one themselves (help and advice is always available).
- Help them to complete their learning of facts, and offer internet access to music sites wherever possible.
- Encourage your child to feel comfortable about singing.

DRAMA

What are the aims of the course?

- To appreciate and understand Drama as an art form.
- To encourage students to evaluate their own work and the work of other students in their group.
- To develop imagination, sensitivity and self-confidence.
- To explore ideas, issues and feelings through Drama.

What is the content of the course?

- Introductory Unit on Drama Techniques
- Issue Based Drama
- Character Based Drama
- Presenting Improvised Drama
- Improvisation from a script
- Performing using script

What will be assessed during the course?

Students will be assessed on:

- How imaginatively they communicate through the language of Drama: space, movement and words.
- How they adopt and sustain roles in the development of the Drama.
- Their use of materials and technical equipment such as sound or lighting.
- Their understanding of the relationship between the actor and the audience.
- How they work in small and large groups.

What homework will be set?

Occasionally students will be required:

- To write reviews of extended improvisations
- To learn lines or produce designs for extended improvisation project.

What opportunities are there for trips and visits?

When available, students will visit the theatre to view appropriate dramatic texts. Workshops, with visiting Theatre Companies, are occasionally arranged.

How can you help your child?

- Take them to see a variety of performances e.g. theatre/musical/mime/circus.
- Encourage them to read a variety of play texts, especially those linked to English Key Stage 3.
- Encourage them to develop their own opinions of different theatrical presentations which they see.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

What are the aims of the course?

- To enable every student to experience and enjoy Physical Education.
- To realise the importance of a healthy lifestyle.
- To develop individual physical skills and appreciation of tactics.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of rules and regulations.
- To provide opportunities for students to play sport.
- To appreciate qualities of teamwork, fair play, discipline and social responsibility.

What is the content of the course?

Students will study the following areas in Year 9

	<u>Boys Core</u>	<u>Girls Core</u>
Invasion:	Rugby Football Hockey Basketball	Hockey Netball Basketball
Net:	Badminton Tennis	Badminton Tennis
Striking:	Cricket	Rounder's
Athletics:	Athletics Orienteering	Athletics Orienteering
Health Related Fitness:	Health Related Fitness Swimming	Health Related Fitness Swimming

What will be assessed during the course?

During the course, students will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate across a range of activities:

- Acquiring and developing skills
- Selecting and applying skills, tactics and compositional ideas
- Evaluating and improving performance
- Knowledge and understanding of fitness and health

The aim being to provide a rounded judgement which relates to National Curriculum expectations.

What opportunities are there for extra-curricular participation in sport?

The programme currently on offer is:

- Athletics (+ Sports Day)
- Basketball (+ School Tournament Boys & Girls)
- Football (Boys & Girls)
- Rounder's (Girls)
- Netball (Girls)
- Tennis (+ School Tournament Boys & Girls)
- Squash (+ School Tournament)
- Yoga
- Badminton (+ School Tournament)
- Cricket (Boys & Girls)
- Hockey (Boys & Girls)
- Rugby (Boys & Girls)
- Golf
- Volleyball
- Aerobics
- Swimming

In addition there are school teams who play regular fixtures against local schools:

Boys: Rugby, Football, Cricket, Tennis, Athletics, Basketball, Hockey, Badminton

Girls: Hockey, Netball, Football, Rounder's, Tennis, Athletics, Badminton

How can you help your child?

- Encourage them to have a positive attitude to Physical Education at their new school.
- Encourage participation in every lesson
- Ensure they have all their correct PE kit with them for every PE lesson regardless of any injury or illness. If your child is well enough to be in school they are well enough to participate in some form of physical activity.
- Try to talk to them about what they have been doing in P.E. and try to encourage them to take an interest in their eating, hygiene and exercise habits.

CITIZENSHIP AND PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

What are the aims of the course?

- To provide students with opportunities to learn about and discuss a range of matters relevant to their personal development.
- To prepare students to make choices about their lives, both in school and in society, by equipping them with relevant knowledge and skills.
- To explore both the values promoted by the school as well as the personal values of the student.
- To reflect on how values affect our decision making as well as our contribution to the communities within which we work, live and learn

What is the content of the course?

Many aspects of **Health Education**, including:

- Drug Use and Abuse, including alcohol and smoking
- Eating disorders
- Sex Education and Relationships, HIV / AIDS, sexually transmitted infections
- **Social Responsibility which explores**
 - The Law
 - Respect for others
 - Respect for your environment
 - Bullying and Anti-Bullying Strategies
 - Crime
 - Safety Awareness, personal safety
 - Democracy and politics
- Careers Education, which will include work around decision making and problem solving, as well as an introduction to the courses on offer at KS4.

What will be assessed during the course?

There are opportunities for both formal and informal assessment in PSHE/Citizenship. The teachers liaise with Tutors so that work done in lessons contributes to students' overall progress in school. Students will be asked to evaluate their own contributions and teachers will assess students' level of participation and ability to communicate their ideas. A brief report outlining the topics studied and progress made by individual students will be provided to parents annually.

What homework will be set?

Regular homework is not a requirement of the course: some topics benefit from research and discussion outside school, and students are always encouraged to pursue interests and develop skills begun within PSHE/Citizenship lessons.

What opportunities are there for trips and visits?

Whilst no trips are currently planned PSHE/Citizenship lessons are on a fortnightly basis and supported by extra conference days with considerable input by outside agencies, as well as the work carried out within the daily tutorial programme.

How can you help your child?

At certain times during the course, your child will be required to take home material specifically intended to be read by, and discussed with, parents (e.g. information leaflets on drugs; Key Stage 4 Subject Choice Booklets). It is also very beneficial if parents feel able to take an interest in the work they do, particularly as so much Citizenship is concerned with making valued and informed decisions about things which are integral to family life. Discussion on topical issues and current affairs would also be beneficial. Encourage viewing of news items on local and global issues. Feedback from parents on the work we do is as welcome as it is valuable.

CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE

What are the aims of the course?

- To introduce students to the concept of Careers Education and Guidance.
- To prepare students to make considered choices for Key Stage 4 subjects.

This course is taught by Citizenship staff in the Spring Term with support and guidance offered by tutors.

What is the content of the course?

- Awareness of self as an individual with skills, abilities and ambitions which are particular and special to each person.
- Decision-making processes and how these can be used in a well-considered way, with particular reference to Key Stage 4 choices.
- Opportunity awareness; students will be given every opportunity to find out about the courses offered in Years 10 and 11.
- Careers research; students will be shown how to access information on computer.

What will be assessed during the course?

Careers work is not assessed; students are told that in careers' terms, the only right answer is one which is truthful and honest, the only wrong answer is one that is not their own opinion, but one which is influenced by pressure from others.

What homework will be set?

Homework is not appropriate, although students will have a form to complete for their Key Stage 4 choices at the end of the Spring Term.

What opportunities are there for trips and visits?

Specific Careers' trips and visits are not organised, but trips organised by other curriculum areas will give students opportunities to experience aspects of the world of work.

How can you help your child?

- Take an interest in their ambitions and encourage them to think through the best way of achieving these.
- Try to discourage them from making choices based on what friends are choosing, or on who currently teaches their class.
- Don't rush to make Key Stage 4 choices; students who choose early may find they have chosen before they have all the subject information.
- Advise your child that the most satisfactory way of choosing school subjects is to choose those where they can experience success and enjoyment.

LEARNING SUPPORT

What are the aims of Learning Support?

- To provide an educational programme for students with Special Educational Needs.
- To provide staff with a comprehensive profile of each student with special needs.
- To monitor students' progress via the Individual Educational Plan and annual review process.

What support is provided?

Assistance provided in Year 9 falls into four categories:

➤ **In-Class Support**

In-class support is given for some students. This may be across all subjects, depending on the needs of the student.

➤ **Paired Reading**

This programme runs during tutorial times. Students work on reading materials suitable to their reading ability, and worksheets are used to check comprehension. The scheme runs with the help of Sixth Form students.

➤ **Withdrawal**

Some students may be withdrawn from lessons for work on areas of specific difficulty. The withdrawal timetable is carefully planned so that no subject is put at a disadvantage.

Withdrawal lessons are carefully structured, and students are returned to full timetables as soon as possible.

➤ **SuccessMaker computer programmes**

Spelling
Reading
Numeracy

- some students undertake SuccessMaker during the day.

How will each student's progress be monitored?

Students' progress will be monitored via:

- Individual Education Plans and reviews.
- Learning Support staff reports.
- Diagnostic testing to quantify progress.
- Liaison with external agencies, parents, Learning Support Assistants and the student themselves.
- School reports and data collections.

Homework

Lunchtime Study Support

All students are welcome to come to Learning Support every lunchtime except Tuesday between 1pm and 2pm where staff will be available for that extra support or students can take advantage of the ICT facilities and use this as a quiet place to study.

How can you help your child?

- By finding the time to listen to your child read regularly. Make the process as interactive as possible i.e. you read a page, then they read a page, stopping to discuss plot development etc.
- Liaise regularly with the Learning Support staff. You will be welcome any time to make an appointment to visit or to telephone. This is the most effective way to build the whole picture of your child's learning experience.
- Encourage them to allocate a regular time slot for completing homework/coursework. If possible be available in this time to answer questions about homework/coursework that has not been understood.
- Help your child to organise themselves with the appropriate books, equipment and completed homework.
- Be supportive, understanding and enthusiastic.