

“The curriculum is outstanding and provides for all students.” Ofsted 2011

# Key Stage 4 Courses

# 2018 – 2021

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“An excellent and continually evolving curriculum is offered. The curriculum, especially in Years 9, 10 and 11, offers breadth and depth and has been thoughtfully enhanced by a range of suitable vocational qualifications.” (Ofsted 2011)

# Introduction

## A Culture of Success

At King Alfred's we aim to ensure all our students gain the highest possible grade at Key Stage 4. The efforts of teachers, parents and most notably students can be seen in our success over a number of years. In each of these years King Alfred's has been amongst the best achieving state schools in Oxfordshire.

## Year 11 Results 2017

<u>9-4 Maths GCSE</u>	<u>69%</u>	<u>9-5 Maths GCSE</u>	<u>45%</u>
<u>9-4 English GCSE</u>	<u>77%</u>	<u>9-5 English GCSE</u>	<u>62%</u>
<u>EBacc</u>	<u>29%</u>	<u>Average Attainment 8</u>	<u>45.71</u>

2017 GCSE results	King Alfred's Academy	England (all schools)
Achieving the EBacc	29%	NA
9-4 Maths	69%	59.4%
9-5 Maths	45%	49.7%
9-4 English	77%	62.1%
9-5 English	62%	53.3%

EBacc gained	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
King Alfred's	19%	28%	28%	33%	29%
Oxfordshire (local authority)	24.00%	26.10%	25.40%	26%	NA
England state-funded	22.80%	24.20%	24.30%	24.5%	NA
England all schools	23.00%	22.90%	22.90%	22.80%	NA

Moreover, in our two most recent Ofsted inspections our curriculum has been highlighted as outstanding for the opportunities it provides for students of all abilities to succeed.

## Key Stage 4 Overview

For all students Key Stage 4 will be three years. This is an innovative approach aimed at our students attaining the highest possible grades. By giving students three years we can focus on students developing the depth and breadth of knowledge required for examination success. Moreover, this greater level of expertise will better equip students for success in Key Stage 5.

The linear nature of the current GCSE qualification means that students will generally sit examinations at the end of Year 11. There are some exceptions to this, notably GCSE Ethics and Philosophy which will be sat by the majority of students at the end of Year 10 and unit examinations in our BTEC vocational qualifications which will happen regularly during Year 10 and Year 11.

Students receive a huge amount of support during the options process. Alongside Parents' Evenings and a chance to try out Key Stage 4 lessons, students and parents all have the opportunity to meet with senior staff to select their choices. All of our GCSE subjects have made the transition to the 'new style' linear GCSE as of September 2017. These new qualifications have been reviewed in terms of content and assessment by the Government, will be graded 9-1 (rather than A\* - G) and will generally will have less, or in most cases, no coursework.

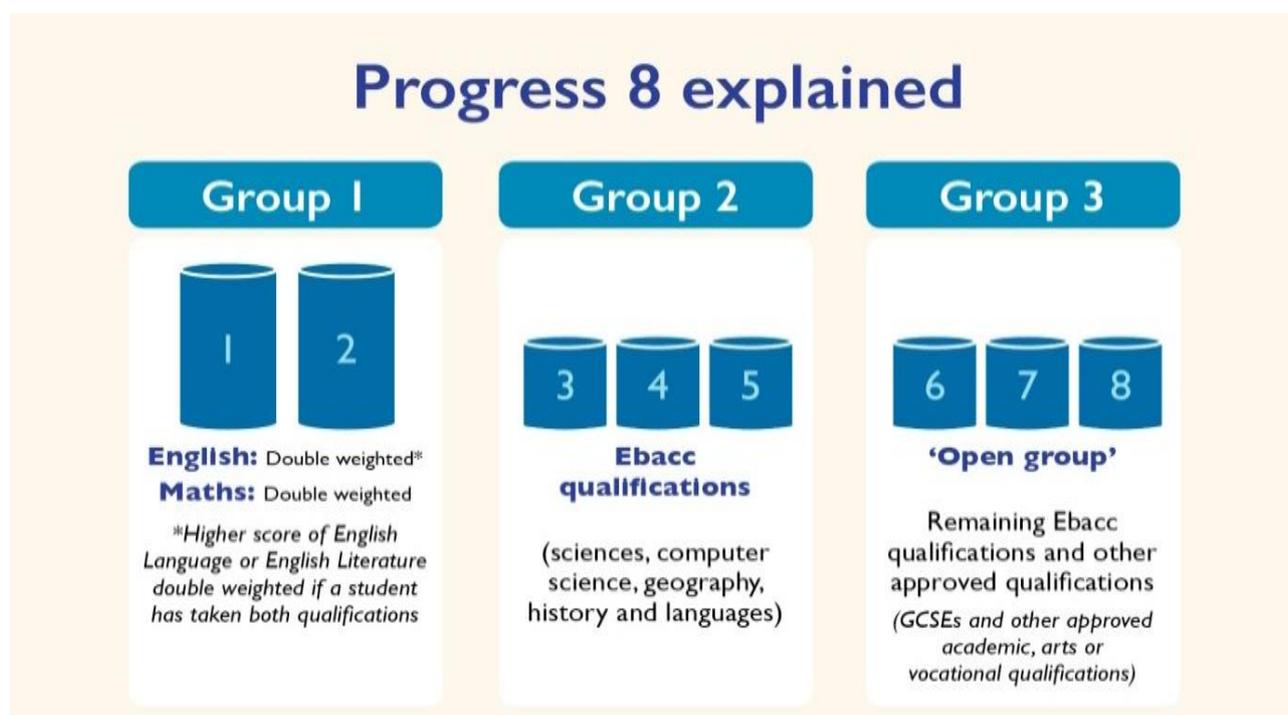
We have developed a robust internal examination process in response to the structure of the new GCSE course. Each KS4 year group across the Academy will have the opportunity to sit a formal 'mock examination' each year. This allows us to track progress and students to experience a 'real exam' scenario.

## An Evolving Curriculum

There have been significant changes to the Key Stage 4 curriculum and the associated accountability, notably the introduction of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) awarded to students who gain a 9 to 5 in English, Maths, Science, History or Geography and a Modern Foreign Language. The Government will also measure student progress by the outcomes achieved in their 'Best 8 qualifications' as of 2016. The need to ensure students meet the demands of the Government's changes have led to alterations to the design of the curriculum and consequently the options older siblings may have been offered.

### How Progress 8 is calculated

We have adopted a 'Pathways' approach to our curriculum structure from 2014 onwards. This allows students a broad and balanced curriculum offer whilst still ensuring that they select a curriculum offer that is appropriate for them and allows for the best possible outcome in terms of meeting the requirements of Progress 8.



### Additional Support

We appreciate that some students and their families may find choosing subjects to study at Key Stage 4 a daunting prospect. We can assure you that the curriculum is designed to give students at King Alfred's the best opportunities to be successful and to attain the qualifications that they need to give them the widest range of choices for further study or employment post 16. It is not possible at this stage to choose a combination of subjects which would limit a student's choices in the future.

To support this process, students and their parents will be invited to individual meetings with a senior member of staff to help make sure that the decision is right for each individual.

Finally, it is important that students make two choices for each list of subjects on their choices form. We cannot guarantee that every student will be able to follow their first choice subject in each list of subjects. The second subject, therefore, offers an alternative if the first choice subject is not available.

Jonathan Smart  
Deputy Headteacher  
Curriculum

# Art

## **Introduction**

GCSE Art and Design enables students to explore a wide range of media and techniques. Students are entered for the unendorsed syllabus which allows them to work in two and three dimensions, as well as using ICT. The course has excellent results and staff work hard to establish a culture in which all attain their full potential. Integral to this aim are opportunities throughout the course for students to extend and develop work begun in normal lessons, including workshops, electives and visits. This approach enhances students' enthusiasm and enjoyment and ensures they develop their awareness and understanding of the subject.

## **What do students study?**

Students will develop many of the skills and media which they have begun using in KS3. This includes producing sculptures, paintings and computer design. In addition, students will have opportunities to work with clay and printmaking. Students will produce preparatory work in a sketchbook, prior to experimenting with techniques and producing their final pieces. Looking at the work of other artists is a key element of the course. To this end, students will visit Art Galleries and Museums in the course of their studies. In their final year students are given greater freedom over their choice of topics. It is expected that they will produce work reflecting self-motivation, self-directed study and a genuine enthusiasm for the subject.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

A large number of students who successfully complete their GCSE course in Art go on to study A Level Art and Design in the Sixth Form, where the department's results are amongst the highest in the country. Numerous students subsequently go on to study Art at degree level, with many eventually working in a wide range of Artistic careers. The Art GCSE course offers excellent opportunities for students to develop cultural and artistic understanding, alongside a broad range of creative skills which would benefit a series of careers including Fashion Design, Architecture, Graphic Design, Animation and work in the media.

## **Homework**

All students will be set homework on a weekly basis throughout the course. All homework contributes to coursework. Students will be expected to complete several sketchbooks throughout the three years, all of which are eligible for submission to the exam board for assessment.

## **Assessment information**

The coursework counts for 60% of the final mark awarded, whilst the final exam counts for the remaining 40% of marks.

## **Coursework**

All students will be expected to produce a number of units of work throughout their course. They will then be expected to select either two, three or four separate units of work, depending on the depth and content of the study, for submission and assessment.

Staff and students regularly mark work to the examination criteria, targeting areas of weakness to maximise potential grades.

## **Additional Information**

Students will be expected to provide themselves with a number of sketchbooks throughout the course.

Extra-curricular activities in Art take place throughout the year and students are encouraged to participate in these.

Extension work is also available for highly talented students.

# BTEC Technical Award in Enterprise

## **Introduction**

The business sector covers a large range of careers. A BTEC Technical Award in Enterprise is the ideal qualification to give you an awareness of the variety of interesting opportunities that are available.

During studies, you will learn about the terms used in business and explore what businesses do; how they operate and the factors that can influence their success. You will also explore how businesses plan for success and the techniques that assist this process, such as break-even analysis and cash flow forecasts. You will find out how to measure revenue, gross profit and net profit and the importance of these to a business. You will also look at how businesses hire and reward their employees and how businesses promote themselves to attract customers.

BTEC Technical Award qualifications are practical, work-related courses. You will learn by completing projects and assignments that are based on realistic workplace situations, activities and demands. Consequently, it is important that you have an interest in this area and have considered working in a Business related setting.

The work that you complete, the assignments that you write and your performance in certain situations will be assessed continuously throughout the course.

## **What is the course structure?**

To gain a Technical Award, you will need to study the following 3 units; Exploring Enterprise; Planning for and running an enterprise and Promotion and Finance for Enterprise.

The course has two internally assessed components, and one that's externally assessed.

Students are given the opportunity to see the areas that they have been taught in the classroom demonstrated in real life businesses through educational and regular outside speakers from industry.

## **What can I do at the end of the course?**

The BTEC Technical Award in Business is valued by employers and can be a route to employment or to a higher level Business Studies programme. If you decide to go straight into employment, you might obtain a trainee position. Trainee positions may be available in finance and general administration, sales and marketing, retailing, warehousing and distribution, insurance, general management and personnel administration.

If you use your BTEC Technical Award to progress on to a BTEC National Diploma in Business, possibly followed by a degree, a range of professions and occupations could be open to you. Those who gain higher and professional qualifications in business and business-related subjects, such as accountancy, marketing, personnel and banking, may progress into any number of careers including; accountancy; marketing & sales; purchasing; banking; human resources; retail management; logistics.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

A BTEC Technical Award in Business provides the opportunity for students to progress onto Advanced level courses. In King Alfred's Sixth Form we offer the following Business courses; BTEC National Award in Business & AS/A2 Business Studies

# BTEC First Award in Health & Social Care

## **Introduction**

Students taking this course will achieve a Level 2 qualification. This is the equivalent of one GCSE grade A\* - C.

BTEC First qualifications are practical, work-related courses. Students will learn through completing a number of projects and assignments that are based on realistic workplace situations, activities and demands. Consequently, it is important that students have an interest in this area and have considered working in a Health and Social Care setting. This qualification will be accepted by the King Alfred's Sixth Form and local colleges as a passport to any Level 3 (AS/A2 or BTEC National) qualifications.

## **What is the course structure?**

To gain a BTEC First Award, students will study various units, these units include:

- Human Lifespan Development – **External Exam**.
- Health and Social Care Values
- Effective Communication in Health and Social Care
- Social Influences on Health and Wellbeing
- Promoting Health and Wellbeing
- Equality and Diversity in Health and Social Care
- Individual Rights in Health and Social Care
- Human Body Systems and Care of Disorders
- The Early Years Sector

## **What can I do at the end of the course?**

With this qualification, you could enter employment and train in some of the following areas of work:

- Registered care homes
- Hospitals and primary care trusts
- Nursing homes
- Health centres

However, it is more likely that students will wish to gain additional qualifications and with extra training or study, they might eventually be employed as:

- a nurse
- a social worker
- a manager of a residential home
- a policeman/woman
- a midwife
- a paramedic
- any career in social services

These careers will normally require you to study Level 3 qualifications and most have a university, post graduate career route.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

BTEC Health and Social Care provides the opportunity for students to progress onto Advanced and Intermediate level courses. In King Alfred's Sixth Form we offer the following course:

- BTEC Subsidiary Diploma or Diploma in Health and Social Care

These courses are directly linked to BTEC Health and Social Care; however, there are a wide variety of other courses available that students can opt for that will complement their skills and the knowledge gained at BTEC.

In addition to further education, BTEC Health and Social Care also prepares students for the world of work. They will learn a wide variety of skills that will be transferable into the work place.

# BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Sports Leadership

## **Introduction**

We have been offering the BTEC qualifications in Sport to KS4 students for many years with outstanding results. At the end of the course students will achieve the BTEC Tech Award in Sports Leadership.

### **This course is ideal for any student who is considering:**

- Following a career in Physical Education teaching.
- Becoming a sports coach either in the community or within a school environment.
- Working within the leisure industry.
- Potential elite performers.

This course would also appeal to any student who simply loves sport!

### **What do students study?**

Students will study a variety of components, including:

- Understanding Sports Leadership
- Developing Sports Leadership Skills
- Planning and Leading a Sports Activity

### **Beyond Key Stage 4**

We hope that many students who follow the BTEC Sport course will go on to study either a range of A Level courses or the BTEC National Diploma in Sport which we will be offering. Many students will then be able to follow other sport related courses at university or go directly into employment within the local sporting community.

### **Homework**

Homework is focused on students working on their coursework assignments.

### **Assessment information**

During the course, each area of study will be assessed by a series of assignments. These will involve a combination of case studies, practicals, performance observations and projects.

Planning and Leading a Sports Activity component is externally assessed.

# BTEC Performing Arts (Dance)

## **Introduction**

*“Dance is vital, an activity both exhilarating and liberating to watch or do. The instinct to dance is fundamentally joyous and no matter how hard you try you can’t get away from that for long.”*

Richard Alston CBE, Dance UK.

The study of dance as an art form contributes to students’ aesthetic and social development. As a physical activity it promotes fitness and wellbeing. Dance also supports learning across a range of subjects. As performers, students develop confidence and self-esteem. They develop self and body awareness as well as sensitivity to others and team-working skills. Effective performance requires physical effort and the determination to succeed and improve. As choreographers, students employ the skills of problem solving and creativity. Effective choreography requires imagination and the ability to synthesise a number of elements. In directing others, students develop their interpersonal and communication skills. As critics, students make informed decisions about the dances they see. They articulate their knowledge, opinions and preferences. Viewing professional dances fulfils students’ cultural entitlement and broadens their artistic experience.

## **What Do Students Study?**

- Dance styles, e.g. contemporary, jazz, musical theatre, street dance, ballet, tap, hip hop, breaking etc.
- Dance skills and techniques – posture, alignment, coordination, balance, ability to reproduce movement patterns, dynamic range, movement quality, movement style, facial expression, focus, emphasis and appreciation of sound accompaniment.
- Using dance, personal management and rehearsal skills in the preparation for the performance of dance work to an audience.
- Demonstrate interpretive skills and stylistic qualities relevant to the dance material in rehearsal and performance

## **How Are They Assessed?**

To gain a BTEC First Award, students will study various units, these units include:

Unit 1: Individual Showcase – External assessment

Unit 2: Preparation, Performance and Production – Internal assessment

Unit 4: Dance Skills – Internal assessment

## **Additional Information**

There will be many opportunities for students to be involved in dance clubs, perform in college dance productions as well as attend dance workshops. It is an expectation that students perform in the annual dance productions.

Students may be involved in working with primary schools and will take part in the Vale Dance Festival.

As part of the BTEC, students will have the opportunity to attend performances for example by the English National Ballet, Rambert Ballet, Random Dance Company and many other dance companies locally and in the West End, London.

Students with experience in any style are suitable for this course. It is advantageous, but not essential, for the student to have studied at least one dance form out of college as this gives a greater awareness of performance skills.

# Business Studies

## **Introduction**

Business Studies is a very popular option in Key Stage 4. It provides students with the opportunity to study a new subject and gain a wide variety of skills related to the world of business. The subject will introduce students to issues concerning the setting up and operation of a business, building up to looking at a study of businesses as they become established and grow and the potential issues expansion may raise.

## **What do students study?**

The course currently comprises of six units:

1. Business in the real world
2. Influences on business
3. Business operations
4. Human resources
5. Marketing
6. Finance

GCSE Business Studies prepares students for a range of courses in Further Education. In addition to creating a sound platform for Further Education, the skills attained in GCSE Business can be seamlessly transferred to the work place.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

GCSE Business Studies provides the opportunity for students to progress onto Advanced level courses. In King Alfred's Sixth Form we offer the following courses:

AS/ A2 Economics

BTEC National Award Business

AS / A2 Business Studies

## **Homework**

Homework is set on a regular basis and will take a variety of forms, including: Research, continuation of classwork; revision of key terms; detailed case studies; past paper exam questions; interactive resources.

## **Assessment information**

GCSE Business Studies follows the specification set by the exam board AQA.

Students are assessed currently through two external examinations, both of which are out of 90 marks and are 1 hour and 45 minutes in duration. Each paper is worth 50% of the overall qualification.

## **Additional Information**

Students are given the opportunity to relate classroom learning to real life businesses through educational visits and guest speaker events, such as Cadbury's World, Thorpe Park, Dragons Den, New York and a Business Studies Conference.

# Computer Science

## **Introduction & What do students study?**

This is a course that has real relevance in our modern world. While learners will no doubt already have some knowledge of computers and related areas, the course will give them an in-depth understanding of how computer technology works and a look at what goes on “behind the scenes”. As part of this, they will investigate computer programming, which many learners find interesting.

Through this study of computer programming, the course will help learners develop critical thinking, analysis and problem solving skills. For many, it will be a fun and interesting way to develop these skills, which can be transferred to other subjects and even applied in day-to-day life. In this way, the course will stimulate interest and engagement with technology and technology-related careers.

Key topics that students will study include:

- Memory
- Storage
- Wired and wireless networks
- Network topologies, protocols and layers
- System security
- System software
- Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental • Programming techniques
- Producing robust programs
- Computational logic
- Translators and facilities of languages
- Data representation

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

In fact, information technologies continue to have a growing importance. This means there will be a bigger demand for professionals who are qualified in this area. If learners want to go on to higher study and employment in the field of Computer Science, they will find that this course provides a superb stepping stone. Learners who have taken a Computing GCSE and who then progress to study the subject at A Level or university will have a sound underpinning knowledge of this subject area.

## **Homework**

Homework is set on a regular basis and will take a variety of forms, including: Research, continuation of classwork; revision of key terms; detailed case studies; past paper exam questions; interactive resources.

## **Assessment information**

The qualification is assessed through two written exams, with the opportunity to practice and develop coding within a portfolio based research task.

# Design and Technology

## **Introduction**

Do you want to be the next Alessi or Dyson or would you like to change the world in which we live?

The Design and Technology department at King Alfred's aims to enhance the educational progression of every student by offering a stimulating and rich learning environment and a mix of practical exploration and real world problem solving activities.

Our team of specialist staff and technicians have great experience across the spectrum of Design and Technology and we teach in dedicated and well-resourced rooms. Our lessons centre on the design process, with students tackling a range of problems in various material areas to create innovative and creative solutions to a range of complex problems.

We are really fortunate now to have 3D printers and Laser cutting technology at KAs which brings us right to the forefront of technological advancements.

## **What do students study?**

GCSE Design Technology will focus on encouraging students to design and make products with creativity and originality, using a range of materials and techniques. Packaging, labelling and instructions are encouraged as part of the complete design proposal and advertising, points of sale can be used to supplement the making experience and help create products which can be evaluated for their commercial viability.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

Students can continue their interest in design by taking an A level course in Product Design in the Sixth Form. These students can then go on to select from the vast range of courses related to design which are offered by the further and higher education system. Others use their qualifications to enter careers related to design, available in the local area. Anything from industrial design to Architecture and civil engineering to F1 Car design.

## **Homework**

Homework supports many of the activities central to Design and Technology and many homework tasks take the form of research or preparation for lessons. Students undertake one homework per fortnight.

Time and effort spent by students at home often makes a significant difference to the final grade. This is especially true of the time taken over proposing design solutions.

## **Assessment information**

At present, King Alfred's use the AQA exam board for Design and Technology. Assessment will be a combination of Exam and Non Exam Assessment, the Exam and NEA are split 50:50.

## **Non Exam Assessment (Coursework)**

The coursework element currently requires students to select a design problem or opportunity which they would like to solve. They then research the area, attempt to solve the problems and test their prototypes. This takes place from the end of Year 10 and requires students to manage their time well.

## **Additional Information**

Health and Safety is a key issue in all practical areas. Students must wear appropriate protective clothing and follow the safety guidelines given at all times.

# Drama

## Introduction

We aim to nurture our students' creativity, communication and performance skills.

The ability to speak and listen effectively is central to a young person's education, and the Drama lesson provides a context to develop these skills. Students also practise teamwork and collaboration, learning to respect differences between group members and to work constructively together.

An awareness of theatre and the possibilities of the dramatic arts are fostered in students. Opportunities to perform and watch theatre on varying scales allow students to develop confidence and an appreciation of performance. Written reviews of performances follow group discussion.

## What do students study?

The course concentrates on teaching the students to create original, meaningful theatre from a range of stimuli.

Students will explore a number of physical techniques which will help them to understand how the body, voice, face and movement can be used and manipulated to create a character in performance. Additionally, students will be introduced to a number of exploration techniques, which will help them to understand how an actor develops a role and how a director can create an effect on an audience.

Students will focus on a particular stimulus or play text in each term and will explore it using a range of drama skills and techniques, they will also begin developing their analytically writing style in preparation for the written elements of the course; play reviews, written reflections, rehearsal process. Students get a chance to practice their skills in Year 10 before being formally assessed in Year 11.

## Units Studied:

- Year 9: This year is an introduction to the skills needed for GCSE and covers a range of units which enable students to develop their devising skills and their understanding of Drama strategies and practitioners. Units have included exploring text such as *'The Government Inspector'* and *'DNA'* looking at physical theatre work, and developing skills through devising from a stimulus. Students will have the opportunity to watch performance work from older students in which they can gain more knowledge and be inspired by their work.
- Year 10: During their GCSE course students will have time to study a variety of different texts and learn about the theatre genre in more depth. For example, theme of Conflict, plays such as *'Too Much Punch for Judy,'* and *'Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night time'*. Students will also begin looking at the written exam and gaining exam practise.
- Year 11: Students complete 3 exam units this year  
**Component 1 Devising:** Students explore a stimulus issued by the exam board. Create a portfolio documenting the development of the piece  
**Component 2 Performance from a Text:** Perform 2 extracts from a chosen text.  
**Component 3: Written exam:** Study of set text *'Blood Brothers'* by Willy Russell and complete a live theatre review

# Economics

## **Introduction**

Economics is a fascinating subject as it equips students with an understanding of their place in and contribution to the local, national and global economy as consumers, workers and citizens. The subject will develop an understanding of economic theories and concepts and students will learn to apply these to a range of economic issues, locally, nationally and globally.

## **What do students study?**

The course comprises of two units:

- Personal Economics
- Investigating Economic Issues

Areas studied throughout the course include:

- Money – Needs and wants of individuals and how this may change over time. Management of personal finances – saving, investing, spending or borrowing
- Work – Why people work and how they are rewarded for it. The concept and issues of unemployment
- National and Global Economy – An overview of international trade and exchange rates. Effect of globalisation and the power of the consumer
- Managing the Economy – Economic objectives of the Government and how the economy is managed. The EU and its effect on the UK Economy
- Current Economic Issues – UK, EU or Global issues from environmental concerns, developing economies, globalisation, poverty and other social issues

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

GCSE Economics provides the opportunity for students to progress onto Advanced level courses:

- AS/ A2 Economics
- AS / A2 Business Studies

## **Homework**

Homework is set on a regular basis and will take a variety of forms, including, research; continuation of classwork; revision of key terms; coursework, detailed case studies; past paper exam questions & interactive resources

## **Assessment information**

GCSE Economics follows the specification set by the exam board AQA. Students are assessed through two external exams (1 ¼ hours each)

## **Additional Information**

Economics is a challenging subject and will appeal to students who have an interest in current affairs; have an enquiring mind and are capable of questioning decisions made by the government and society as a whole.

# English

## **Introduction**

All students entering Year 9 this year will be taking two GCSE's: English Language, and English Literature. These are very worthwhile and enriching courses, which equip students with the skills necessary to write persuasively and accurately, and read with confidence. For all students:

- Both courses will be 100% exam, with no coursework or speaking and listening marks
- Students will have to read texts from different periods in history, including the 19th century
- All students will have to read and write about works of literature, including Shakespeare
- Students will be marked on the accuracy of their spelling, punctuation and vocabulary

For this reason, we have made radical changes to the Key Stage 4 curriculum at King Alfred's, to make study for these challenging new GCSE's as exciting and successful as possible. The 3-year course, from Year 9 to Year 11, will focus on:

- Building up a knowledge base of sophisticated vocabulary
- Writing clearly and accurately, using words that are appropriate for different readers
- Building confidence in reading new and difficult texts
- Applying the skills learned in English lessons to the world around us and our future lives

## **What do students study?**

As well as covering the skills of reading and writing listed above, students will be supported to think independently, express their ideas clearly in speeches and debates, and listen and respond to others' opinions. Although speaking and listening does not form part of their final assessment, good speaking and listening skills are the foundation on which careful reading and clear writing are built.

In GCSE English Language, students can expect to study a range of texts during the course, from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century. They will also write their own texts in a range of genres.

In GCSE English Literature, students will read a range of stories, plays and poems written over the last 500 years.

It is important to note that the new GCSEs are 3-year courses at King Alfred's, and that texts students study from Year 9 onwards will be part of their final GCSE exam in Year 11. For this reason, effective working habits, including careful note-taking, completion of homework tasks and the meeting of deadlines are essential to success.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

An English qualification at GCSE is one of the essential requirements for transition to Higher Education or employment. Large numbers of students go on to study A Level English Literature (OCR) and the range and depth of study afforded by the English GCSE courses prepares the students well for the demands of numerous other AS/A2 courses as well. English Language A Level (AQA) is also returning this year, and has enjoyed considerable exam success in the past at King Alfred's.

## **Homework**

Homework will be set to prepare students for the next topics or to consolidate the skills they have learnt in class.

## **Assessment information**

Students study the AQA English Language 8700 and English Literature 8702 qualifications, both of which are assessed through 100% exam-based testing.

# Food Preparation and Nutrition

## **Introduction**

Can you cook an egg 6 different ways or debone a chicken; do you know your gluten from your gelatine?

The Food Preparation and Nutrition department at King Alfred's aims to enhance the educational progression of every student by offering a stimulating and rich learning environment where food and nutrition is explored practically.

Our team of specialist teaching staff and technicians have great experience and we teach in dedicated and well-resourced rooms. Our lessons focus on achieving the best possible results for our students as well as giving them a vast knowledge of preparing meals from around the world and the science and technology behind them.

## **What do students study?**

Students who follow this course will investigate areas of food preparation, nutrition and food science. The course develops a detailed understanding of the effect nutrients have on our body and the scientific reactions that take place when we cook. The students on the course will be asked to design, plan, prepare and make their own food dishes based on various design specifications. The students will experience considerations of cost and nutritional values. There is a large science element in the understanding of how different ingredients work and their nutritional values.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

Many students continue their studies beyond Key Stage 4 by following BTEC Hospitality in the Sixth Form. Our students also go on to study a vast range of courses related to nutrition and diet, catering, science and the food industry which are offered by the further and higher education system. Others use their qualifications to embark on careers related to catering, anything from chefs to food technologists and food scientists.

## **Homework**

Homework supports the learning in lessons; many homework tasks take the form of research or preparation for lessons. Students undertake at least one homework per fortnight.

Time and effort spent by students at home often makes a significant difference to the final grade. This is especially true of the time taken over designing and preparing dishes.

## **Assessment information**

We use the Eduqas exam board, Students gain 50% from controlled assessment and 50% from a written examination paper.

The controlled assessment element is over two tasks, one involves experimenting with the sciences behind the food we eat and one where students can create dishes related to a particular topic. They will research the area, trial relevant dishes and plan for their practical exam. The written examination tests student knowledge of the materials, technologies, and issues relating to their specialist area.

## **Additional Information**

Students are required to bring their own ingredients for practical lessons although support in this can be provided depending on circumstances.

# French

## **Introduction**

The study of a foreign language is vital for young people in the modern world. Universities and employers are incredibly interested in applications from students who have good results at GCSE and beyond, and the opportunities for travel are endless.

French is still one of the most widely spoken languages in Europe and Africa!

French at King Alfred's is taught by experienced specialists, all of whom have lived or spent time living and working in a French-speaking country, including France, Switzerland and Rwanda! All are committed to introducing young people to the language and culture of France and the French speaking world in an interesting and enjoyable way.

## **What do students study?**

The Modern Foreign Languages Department offers a GCSE course at Key Stage 4 that covers three 'themes' on which GCSE assessments are based:

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

Assessment is via examinations in the four skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. There are two tiers of assessment: Foundation (grades 1-5) and Higher (grades 4-9); each exam is worth 25% of the final grade. With a three-year Key Stage 4, we are able to re-visit topics and grammar frequently to consolidate knowledge in preparation for the exams at the end of Year 11.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

A good number of students continue to study French at AS and A2 level, read French at university, often combined with other subjects or are able to spend a year in a French University as part of their degree.

## **Homework**

Homework is set regularly, on a weekly basis. It can take a variety of forms including learning vocabulary, written work or preparation for future tasks. You will be reading, studying and enjoying French literature as well.

## **Additional Information**

Trips to French-speaking countries are incredibly rewarding and enjoyable part of the course. Currently, students have the opportunity to take part in a French exchange in Year 11 but we frequently review and update our MFL trip offer.

Use of new technologies to search for information, not only about the French language, but also about French culture is strongly recommended. Short videos and online sources provide a wealth of authentic resources that are easily enjoyable.

Students can also practice their speaking skills and improve their listening skills in the personalised environment of our IT rooms.

# Geography

## **Introduction**

Geography teaching at King Alfred's aims to stimulate students' curiosity about the natural and human world, the local area and distant countries and our precious and fragile environment. Students will be asked to think about how the way they live has an impact on the planet. They will be asked to consider other peoples' experiences and how they might think about things differently. Students will also learn about how governments, organisations and businesses influence the world.

## **What do students currently study?**

Current and future Year 9 students will study the new AQA Geography Specification (8035).

Students who take GCSE Geography study the following areas:

- Real places and events from a local to global scale.
- The formation of natural landscapes and features, and those made by people.
- The impact of people on the environment and how we can best manage our resources for the future.
- Skills such as descriptive and explanatory writing, numeracy and presentation of information using diagrams and graphs.
- Reading and interpreting maps and photos, and drawing maps.

Throughout the course students are encouraged to develop their own thoughts and opinions about the issues affecting the world today. In Year 9 students will be introduced to a variety of geographical skills within a range of contexts.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

Many students go on to study Geography at A Level. GCSE Geography prepares students for a wide range of other higher level qualifications as it develops literacy, numeracy, graphical and ICT skills.

## **Homework**

Students should expect one homework per fortnight. Homework will usually be delivered in the 'menu' style to give students a choice over what homework task they complete. All tasks will be linked to the exam board specification. Homework tasks are intended to offer a variety of types of learning. Possible homework tasks include writing in a variety of styles – e.g. debates, speeches or newspaper articles, interpreting maps, graphs and diagrams. researching information

Exam style questions

Revision

## **Assessment information**

Every six weeks student attainment and progress will be assessed. Assessment tasks are based on previous exam questions and are marked according to exam board specifications. Students are expected to take these seriously and revise thoroughly since these help to determine which tier of exam will be sat at the end of the course.

## **Final Examinations**

Students will sit three examinations at the end of Year 11. Paper 1 covers topics studied in the 'Living with the physical environment' unit; paper 2 covers topics studied in the 'Challenges in the human environment' unit and paper 3 includes questions on fieldwork completed and questions on pre-release material. The exam board will send pre-release material 12 weeks before the exam giving us time to analyze and link it to geographical concepts and theories.

This specification does not include any coursework or controlled assessment.

## **Additional Information**

The Geography department will offer a non-residential fieldwork experience, in a natural and urban environment, in both Year 9 and 10. This will relate directly to the written fieldwork exam, and normally costs approximately £25. We also offer an optional residential extension trip that combines outdoor activities with more advanced geographical studies.

# Graphics

## **Introduction**

Every day we are bombarded by visual imagery, whether this is the packaging containing our food, the sleek design of our most recent technology or the logo's on our clothing. Graphics is a method of communicating with an audience, whether that is through point of sale in advertising, through posters, leaflets or in presentations and displays. GCSE Graphics will enable students to explore these various areas, experimenting with techniques and creating work in order to advertise specific products. Students will study a range of materials and processes considering the audience and how they will be attracted by unique designs. Integral to the course are opportunities for students to extend and develop work begun in class including workshops, electives and visits. This approach enhances students' enthusiasm and enjoyment, and ensures they develop their awareness and understanding of the subject.

## **What do students study?**

Students will develop many skills they have developed at Key Stage 3, particularly in Art and Technology. Students will work in card and paper to explore a range of products associated with displays, design presentation, packaging and graphic communication. The students will explore and develop techniques such as sketching, use of colour, technical drawing, model making, design presentation and CAD/CAM work. Students currently use computer design packages to layer and manipulate their imagery as well as allowing them to incorporate typography into their designs.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

Students who successfully complete their GCSE could go on to study A Level Art and Design in the Sixth Form. From there, students may wish to study Art, Graphic Design or Illustration at foundation level or degree level or alternatively pursue a career in industry. For those students not wishing to take Graphics on beyond GCSE, the course offers excellent opportunities to develop a business and media understanding alongside creative skills that would benefit a series of careers.

## **Homework**

All students will be set homework on a weekly basis throughout the course. All homework contributes to coursework. Students will be expected to complete several sketchbooks and e-portfolios throughout the three years, all of which are eligible for submission to the exam board for assessment.

## **Assessment information**

The coursework counts for 60% of the final mark awarded, whilst the final exam achieves the remaining 40% of marks.

## **Coursework**

All students will be expected to produce a number of units of work throughout their course. They will then be expected to select either two or three separate units of work, depending on the depth and content of the study, for submission and assessment.

Staff and students regularly mark work to the examination criteria targeting areas of weakness to maximise potential grades.

## **Additional Information**

Extra-curricular activities in Graphics will take place throughout the year and students are encouraged to participate in these. Extension work is also available for highly talented students, including attending weekend workshops and museum/gallery visits.

# History

## **Introduction**

In the History Department we aim to promote the teaching of key skills and concepts in History. We also want to stimulate enthusiasm for and enjoyment of the study of the past. We look at individuals and their role in shaping other people's lives. We examine change over time and help students understand the causes of change and its consequences across History. We analyse why historical events and people are interpreted in different ways, through a critical examination of sources of evidence. We also organise trips and fieldwork so that students get an appreciation of History all around them.

## **What do students currently study?**

The new specification consists of five units. For the British element of the course, students will study The People's Health c.1250-present and the Norman Conquest 1065-1087. For the wider world section students will study The Making of America 1789-1900 and Living under Nazi Rule 1933-1945. There will also be a 'History around Us' unit where we will study a historical site.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

Many students continue to study History in the Sixth Form and develop their skills further. The skills and concepts learnt service Key Stage 5 History well. Elements at GCSE are explored and assessed in History at A Level.

## **Homework**

Homework will seek to build on the learning in lessons. Most commonly this will take the form of revision of units of work or topics recently covered and exam style questions. We also encourage students to prepare for topics that are about to be covered and do further research to find out more about the events and people that we discuss in class.

## **Assessment information**

OCR History Syllabus B – Schools History Project.

Students will be assessed through three written examinations.

# Mathematics

## **Introduction**

As of 2017, the format and content of the Maths GCSE has been significantly revised and students entering Year 9 will follow a broader and deeper curriculum, with a much greater focus on problem solving in real-life and mathematical contexts.

Through a carefully crafted curriculum delivered by a large and experienced teaching team, the aims of the Maths Faculty are to help each student develop their mathematical ability to the full, to promote mathematical skills fluency, to foster an interest in and enthusiasm around the subject and to give students the mathematical and problem-solving skills needed in everyday life.

Students are taught in ability groups, and these sets are reviewed regularly to ensure that each student is in the class where they are likely to make the greatest progress.

## **What do students study?**

Students will study a range of topics from the following six areas:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, Proportion and Rates of Change
- Geometry and Measure
- Statistics
- Probability

Students will study not only the methods, skills and concepts for each topic, but will also be exposed to questions that pose problems written in a mathematical or real-life context.

Students will learn different problem solving strategies to address, deconstruct, and ultimately solve such problems. An exciting new facet of the Maths GCSE is the inclusion of problems which ask students to evaluate their own and others' reasoning. Taken together, these problem solving and evaluative skills are highly transferrable to other subjects, study beyond Key Stage 4 and everyday life.

Teaching styles will vary between topics and students can expect to be taught in a traditional style, at times working in groups, as well as having the opportunity to work with ICT, including spreadsheets and graph plotting programs.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

A Mathematics qualification is one of the essential qualifications for entry into Higher Education and employment.

Beyond Key Stage 4, many students continue to study Mathematics and have a choice of qualifications: Core Maths; A-Level Mathematics; and A-Level Further Mathematics. GCSE Mathematics also supports and is often required for quantitative subjects such as Physics, Chemistry or Economics.

Many students progress to study Maths or other related subjects at University and a number of our students have been accepted by Russell Group Universities, including Oxford and Cambridge.

## **Homework**

Homework is set regularly, in order to consolidate conceptual understanding and develop skills fluency. There is no set format for homework, and this will vary over the GCSE Mathematics course. Some homework may be paper-based, comparable to a worksheet, and other homework will be set on one of the several online platforms that we use. For instance, [www.mymaths.co.uk](http://www.mymaths.co.uk) may be used for skills practice or [www.pearsonactivelearn.com](http://www.pearsonactivelearn.com) may be used for practice of the new-style problem solving questions.

Challenge homework tasks will also be available throughout the duration of the Maths GCSE course, and these are intended to broaden students' understanding and mathematical skills through exposure to rich and challenging problems.

We actively encourage and support students to develop their independent work in the subject, to take careful notes, and engage with homework and revise outside of lessons.

### **Assessment Information**

We currently enter students for the Edexcel Mathematics GCSE, which consists of 3 one-and-a-half hour exams each equally weighted. Two of the exams are calculator-allowed, and one is non-calculator. There is no coursework for this GCSE.

### **Additional Information**

In addition to promoting an interest and enjoyment in Mathematics through lesson time, we seek to encourage a wider interest in the subject through competitions such as the Intermediate Maths Challenge as well as events such as the Maths Feast and Team Challenges. We always have a considerable number of students gaining certificates in the challenges, and have had several students being invited to take part in further national stages, following the initial competition.

We also provide extra support for students throughout the GCSE Maths course, for instance through sessions during Electives and holiday revision sessions.

# Media

## Introduction

The Creative Art and Design department are delighted to offer a contemporary and exciting GCSE course in Media. It is a very popular subject which offers you the opportunity to study mass communication in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century including the platforms of e-media, film, television, radio, magazines and newspapers. We look at the formal and informal methods of communicating through media, from television news to website blogs and instant messaging. The course is structured so that you gain insights into the theory of media, but also allows you to put into practice your understanding in a practical way by learning to script and storyboard, film and edit moving image.

## What do students study?

### TV and Promoting Media

#### Section A: Television

Students will engage with **one in-depth study** covering contemporary and historic television products, responding to questions covering the whole of the theoretical framework and a range of media contexts. **Section B: Promoting Media** Learners will study media products from the same global conglomerate producer illustrating the media forms advertising and marketing, and video games.

### Music and News

**Section A: Music** Learners will engage with **one in-depth study** covering magazines. Learners will also engage with music videos and radio. Learners will respond to questions covering the whole of the theoretical framework.

#### Section B: The News

Learners will engage with **one in-depth study** covering online, social and participatory media. Learners will also engage with newspapers. Learners will respond to questions covering the whole of the theoretical framework and a range of media contexts.

### Creating Media

Non-exam assessment (NEA) Practical Coursework

## Beyond Key Stage 4

Many students continue to study Film Studies in the Sixth Form at A Level and develop their skills further. Our thriving Sixth Form Media and Film Studies course has seen numerous students gaining employment in the Media industry in a number of areas including film, animation, make up and stage design, web site optimisation.

## Homework

Homework will seek to build on the learning in lessons. This may be in the form of reviewing and analysing a television programme, researching media institutions by making market research or even directing and producing a short film.

## Coursework

Students will be expected to complete practical work and this needs to be planned at home. Emphasis is on students directing their own learning through supportive mentoring from their teachers.

## Additional Information

We pride ourselves in our connections to people who work in the industry and we organise a series of speakers and events. These have included producers from the BBC, the BBFC, an animator from the film Industry, ITV, Film Oxford to name but a few. This year we won the overall 'Best Production' prize at the Oxfordshire Schools Film Festival and two of our students have achieved the Silver Arts Award for their filmmaking, in partnership with the British Film Institute.

# Music

## **Introduction**

Music GCSE is a diverse subject involving work across many fields including literacy, investigation, specialist use of music technology and especially creativity. The course aims to develop understanding and appreciation of a range of musical styles and a lifelong interest in music.

The Key Stage 4 Music course at King Alfred's is aimed at the full range of abilities with the chosen exam specification designed to both push accomplished musicians and dramatically raise the skills of the less musically experienced. Students will gain life skills in performing, listening, appraising, evaluating and composing while acquiring a broad knowledge of music from around the world across the last millennium.

We use a combination of County Music Service, private tutors and our own sixth form student leaders to complement music lessons, with instrumental lessons being available to students wanting to have lessons at school.

## **What do students study?**

The GCSE course includes the following areas of study:

- Performance (30%) – One solo and one group performance, lasting in combination 4 minutes.
- Composition (30%) – Two compositions, one following a brief and the other free choice lasting in combination 4 minutes.
- Analysis (40%) – this aspect includes the study of music theory and the following set works:

## **Instrumental Music 1700–1820**

- J S Bach: 3rd Movement from Brandenburg Concerto no. 5 in D major
- L van Beethoven: 1st Movement from Piano Sonata no. 8 in C minor 'Pathétique'

## **Vocal Music**

- H Purcell: Music for a While
- Queen: Killer Queen (from the album 'Sheer Heart Attack')

## **Music for Stage and Screen**

- S Schwartz: Defying Gravity (from the album of the cast recording of Wicked)
- J Williams: Main title/rebel blockade runner (from the soundtrack to Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope)

## **Fusions**

- Afro Celt Sound System: Release (from the album 'Volume 2: Release')
- Esperanza Spalding: Samba Em Preludio (from the album 'Esperanza')

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

GCSE Music is obviously the best way to proceed onto AS and A2 music courses but this is not the only reason to obtain the qualification. A GCSE in Music will give any student many life-skills both musical and general, many of which employers look for on CVs. The course develops the ability to take responsibility for their own learning as well as attaining skills such as confidence, research, evaluation and quick thinking.

## **Homework**

Students will be expected to practice their own instrument regularly, as college teaching time is generally not used for learning instrumental skills. A proportion of teaching time will be used for ensemble work and working on performance skills but students will be expected to have lessons on their chosen instrument outside of the college timetable.

A proportion of the students composing work will need to happen at home [with the exception of composing coursework] but this will be fully supported in lessons, while other homework tasks may include listening, writing, presentation preparation, research or revising.

### **Assessment information**

At present, King Alfred's use the Edexcel exam board for Music GCSE (the 2016 specification).

### **Examinations**

- **Listening Exam:** An exam will be taken at the end of Year 11 based on the set works studied in lessons. Extracts of music will be played with students expected to answer a range of different style questions. This counts for 40% of the GCSE.

### **Coursework**

The coursework for music concentrates heavily on Performance and Composition. **It makes up 60% of the overall GCSE.**

Students perform a number of pieces throughout the course, both solos and ensembles (two or more in a group) on their specialist instrument, and they then submit their two best performances for their final coursework portfolio.

They will compose throughout the course in a variety of styles, with others and on their own, using their own instrument, keyboards, and computers, as a reinforcement of the musical techniques and styles studied. Two compositions are submitted for final assessment.

### **Additional Information**

#### **Costs**

Students will be expected to own or have use of an instrument on which to perform. The use of a piano or keyboard at home for composition is also advised, although the college provide access to relevant instruments at lunchtime and after college.

From time to time the music department organises theatre visits, workshops and other musical opportunities. There is usually a small charge.

#### **Extra-curricular opportunities**

The Music Department runs many enrichment activities both during elective time and at other specified times. Music students are welcome and will be actively encouraged to attend certain activities to obtain quality ensemble experience. Students are also encouraged to use their talents by helping with lower school electives on East and West Sites. At present the Music department runs the following electives:

- Key Stage 4/5 production- Tuesday/Wednesday
- Rock Band - Tuesday
- Music Theory (terms 5/6)
- Choir- Friday
- Concert Band- Friday

Students will be offered the opportunity to perform in informal concerts throughout the year, especially after or in preparation for graded exam work. At present they are encouraged to participate in the Christmas Concert, Upper College production in March and Summer Soirees in July. Other opportunities will include trips to see live music performed and visits from professional musicians who will lead workshops and master-classes.

# Personal Development Curriculum (PSHCE, Citizenship & Work Related Learning)

## **Introduction**

PSHCE and Citizenship help students to develop their personal skills, reflect on their attitudes and become responsible and effective members of the community. Many opportunities occur within the different subjects of the curriculum and through the other activities which are part of King Alfred's life (such as the Elective Programme, Sex and Relationships Education, Theme Days). Students also cover subjects relevant to PSHE and Citizenship through specially arranged enrichment events and during tutor time.

## **What do students study?**

Students study a wide variety of issues so that they can learn how to:

- Understand and manage their emotions
- Sustain worthwhile relationships
- Engage in age appropriate sex and relationships education
- Value themselves and respect others
- Appreciate difference and diversity
- Manage personal finances
- Know some learning styles and revision techniques
- Understand UK Law and Government
- Contribute to and participate in King Alfred's and the wider community

Students will also research into and discuss questions that relate to important social issues such as human rights, the law, crime, punishment and international relations.

Work related learning is a statutory requirement involving learning *through* work (for example work experience), learning *about* work and working practices, and learning *for* work by developing suitable skills and personal attributes.

Work Related Learning includes a two-week work placement.

## **Homework & Assessment**

Homework will not be set in this subject and at present this area is not formally assessed.

# Philosophy and Ethics (Religious Studies)

## **Introduction**

This subject encourages students to develop their philosophical and ethical thinking, by reflecting on religious beliefs. Throughout the course students will develop their reasoning skills and evaluate philosophical and religious concepts. The course promotes tolerance and makes a significant contribution to students' spiritual, moral and cultural development.

## **What do students study?**

The course is made up of two sections, with four units in each:

- Beliefs about deity (Christianity & Islam)
- Living the religious life (Christianity & Islam)
- Marriage and the family (Christianity)
- Matters of Life and death (Christianity)
- Crime and punishment (Islam)
- Peace and conflict (Islam)
- The viewpoints of two religions (Christianity and Islam) will be considered on the course.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

The Philosophy and Ethics Religious Studies course provides a good academic basis for all further study as it trains students to think for themselves and deepens their knowledge and understanding of the diverse world we live in. It also teaches students to evaluate, which is essential for further study. Students are able to study A Level Religious Studies in the Sixth Form.

## **Homework**

Various types of task will be set, including research, practice exam questions, and creative tasks. The use of IT is strongly encouraged.

## **Assessment information**

Syllabus: *AQA: Religious Studies A (9-1)*

100% examination. Same examinations for all students. No tiers.

## **Coursework**

There are no coursework requirements. The course is assessed through written examinations.

## **Additional Information**

### **Costs which may arise**

Students may have opportunities to go on any appropriate trips to support the course.

### **Opportunities for gifted and talented students**

Students are given open-ended assignments and opportunities to research in depth.

# Physical Education

## **Introduction**

GCSE PE is a popular option at KS4. The PE department has a record of high success in GCSE. In 2017 90% of students passed the GCSE with grades A\*-C and 20% achieving A\*-A. Many of the students now study the subject within the 6<sup>th</sup> form.

The course builds upon the knowledge, understanding and skills established in Key Stage 3 Physical Education. GCSE Physical Education will allow students exciting opportunities to be involved in a number of different physical activities, promoting an active and healthy lifestyle. Students will also study the theoretical aspects of Physical Education.

This qualification should appeal to any student who:

- Take part in competitive sport outside of class time.
- Dedicated to improving sporting performance.
- Enjoy analysing and reflecting on performance.
- Want to know more about the benefits of sport and exercise.
- Considering a sports-related career or an A Level Higher Education course.

## **What do students study?**

The GCSE course consists of 60% theory and 40% practical performance (30% as a performer and 10% completing analysis and evaluation).

## **Assessments**

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport.

Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport.

Practical performance in physical activity and sport. Three activities – ONE team, ONE individual and the third either a team or individual (from list below).

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

There are many courses which students may go on to study in the Sixth Form. They are as follows:

- AS and A2 PE
- BTEC National Diploma in Sport

## **Outside of the classroom**

Homework will be set for the theory aspect of the course in order to cement a student's knowledge and understanding of the topics studied.

Students are expected to attend at least one extra-curricular sporting activity a week. This will help them to improve their practical skills. Active participation at a sporting club with specialist coaching is recommended.

## **Practical performance list:**

**Team:** Association football, badminton, basketball, camogie, cricket, dance, Gaelic football, handball, hockey, hurling, lacrosse, netball, rowing, rugby league, rugby union, squash, table tennis, tennis, volleyball.

**Individual:** Amateur boxing, athletics, badminton, canoeing, cycling, dance, diving, golf, gymnastics, equestrian, kayaking, rock climbing, rowing, sculling, skiing, snowboarding, squash, swimming, table tennis, tennis, trampolining.

## **Note**

Due to the nature of the course staff will continually assess students practical and theory performance. At the end of Term 1 in Year 9 individuals may be recommended an alternative course.

# Science

## **Introduction**

*"Science stimulates and excites our curiosity about phenomena and the world around us. It satisfies this curiosity with knowledge. Because Science links direct practical experience with ideas, it engages us at many levels. Scientific method is about developing and evaluating explanations through experimental evidence and modelling. This is a spur to critical and creative thought.*

*Through Science, students understand how major scientific ideas contribute to technological change - impacting on industry, business and medicine and improving quality of life. Students learn to question and to discuss science based issues that will affect their own lives and the direction of society."*

All students at King Alfred's Academy complete Science at GCSE. They will either study the Combined Science (which awards two GCSEs) or Separate Science course (which awards three GCSEs). Both courses are taught in our new state of the art Science block in nine hourly lessons over the fortnight. These lessons are run by our experienced, dedicated, specialist team. Each of us endeavour to instil a sense of wonder in our students, relate science to their everyday lives and open them to a world of possibilities that science brings.

Decisions on whether students study Combined or Separate Science will be made in January of Year 9, using six assessments from the Fundamentals of Science.

## **What do students study in GCSE Science?**

### **Biology**

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

### **Chemistry**

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

### **Physics**

- Forces
- Energy
- Waves
- Electricity
- Magnetism and electromagnetism
- Particle model of matter
- Atomic structure

## **GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy**

Students at King Alfred's study Combined Science using the AQA Science Trilogy specification.

### **Assessment information**

Combined Science is formally examined at the end of year 11. There are 6 papers in total: two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas. Each paper is worth 16.7% of the GCSE and each is 75 minutes in length.

### **GCSE Separate Science**

Students taking the Separate Science course study the same modules as Combined Science but in greater depth. Upon completion they will receive 3 GCSEs, one in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. It is important to note that it is not necessary to study Separate Science GCSEs in order to study any scientific discipline at AS or A2 level. Combined Science also provides good preparation for studying Science at AS and A level.

### **Assessment Information**

Combined Science is formally examined at the end of year 11. There are two papers for Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas. Each paper is worth 50% of the GCSE and each is 105 minutes in length.

### **Homework**

Homework is set on a regular basis and covers a wide variety of activities. Examples may include writing up practical work, extended writing pieces or applying Science to the outside world. Homework is intended to be both challenging and engaging for all students.

# Spanish

## **Introduction**

Do you want to learn one of the most widely spoken languages in the world? Spanish is an exciting, vibrant language that is spoken in 44 countries around the world, the majority of which are in the fascinating continent of South America.

Spanish (and French) are part of the English Baccalaureate, and as such are highly regarded by universities and employers. Learning a foreign language to GCSE level provides students with many opportunities and benefits including:

- The opportunity to develop communication skills
- The chance to learn about a new culture through film, music and authentic materials
- Opportunities to visit Spain and practise the language with native speakers

## **What do students study?**

The Modern Foreign Languages Department offers a GCSE course at Key Stage 4 that covers three 'themes'.

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

Within these themes we cover engaging topics such as music, cinema, sport and culture. The advantage of these topics is that every student has some experience to share!

Assessment is via examinations in the four skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. There are two tiers of assessment: Foundation (1-5) and Higher (4-9); each exam is worth 25% of the final grade. With a three-year Key Stage 4, we are able to re-visit topics and grammar frequently to consolidate knowledge in preparation for the exams at the end of Year 11.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

We are pleased to offer Spanish A Level as an option at 6<sup>th</sup> Form.

## **Homework**

Homework is set regularly, on a weekly basis. It can take a variety of forms including learning vocabulary, research, written work or preparation for future lessons.

## **Additional Information**

We have our very popular Spanish Exchange with Baeza, a beautiful town in Southern Spain that was added to the World Heritage Site list in 2003. On the programme there are days at school as well as visits to exciting towns such as Granada, Córdoba or Sevilla.

Exchange students will be given a list of useful websites and materials, and are strongly encouraged to make use of the wealth of information and fun activities on the Internet.

If students continue, there is a Key Stage 5 trip to a language school in Málaga.

Access to IT rooms enables us to provide students with opportunities to extend their independent work and personalise their learning with a range of online sources including Vocab Express and ActiveLearn.

# Textiles

## **Introduction**

We all use Textile products to keep warm, wash, decorate, and look fashionable. GCSE Textiles enables students to explore these various products, experimenting with techniques and creating pieces to wear and display. Students will study a range of traditional and contemporary Textiles understanding the context in which they were produced. Integral to the course are opportunities for students to extend and develop work begun in class including workshops, electives and visits. This approach enhances students' enthusiasm and enjoyment, and ensures they develop their awareness and understanding of the subject.

## **What do students study?**

Students will develop many skills they have experimented with in the lower school. Students will learn techniques to print and dye fabric. They will be taught a range of contemporary and traditional methods including batik, stitching, pleating, transfer and heat setting. Students will use these techniques to create a range of fashion or costume pieces varying from wall hangings, hats, caps and scarves to bodices and sports tops. In their designs students will consider pattern, shape, colour, harmony and repetition. Students will also need to show an awareness of the purpose and potential market for their work, understanding how meanings are conveyed through particular fabrics or colour combinations. Many of these areas will be supported through the use of ICT. Looking at the work of others is a key element of the course. To this end visits are arranged so students can see Textile processes and work at first hand.

## **Beyond Key Stage 4**

A large number of students who successfully complete their GCSE will go on to study A Level Textiles in the Sixth Form. From there students may wish to study Fashion and Textiles at degree level or pursue a career in industry. For those students not wishing to take Textiles beyond GCSE the course offers excellent opportunities to develop cultural understandings alongside creative skills that would benefit a series of careers.

## **Homework**

All students will be set homework on a weekly basis throughout the course. All homework contributes to coursework. Students will be expected to complete several sketchbooks throughout the three years, all of which are eligible for submission to the exam board for assessment.

## **Assessment information**

The coursework counts for 60% of the final mark awarded, whilst the final exam counts for the remaining 40% of marks.

## **Coursework**

All students will be expected to produce a number of units of work throughout their course. They will then be expected to select either two or three separate units of work, depending on the depth and content of the study, for submission and assessment.

Staff and students regularly mark work to the examination criteria targeting areas of weakness to maximise potential grades.

## **Additional Information**

Students will be expected to provide themselves with a number of sketchbooks throughout the course.

Extra-curricular activities in Textiles take place throughout the year and students are encouraged to participate in these.

Extension work is also available for highly talented students, including attending weekend workshops and museum/gallery visits.