



# Year 9 option subjects booklet 2024-2025



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# The 5 year curriculum



When pupils join us in year 7 they embark on their journey through our 5 year curriculum. They get the opportunity to study a breadth of subjects during year 7 and 8, including a wide range of Expressive Art subjects, Design and Technology subjects, Computer Science and Humanities, as well as subjects such as RE, Science, Maths, English and Modern Foreign Languages. We believe this breadth allows pupils the opportunity to develop wide knowledge and understanding, and also to develop the [Learning Talents and Gifts We Grow](#) in many different subject contexts.

For a number of years we have recognised the importance of the transition from year 8 into year 9 as a waypoint in the 5 year curriculum. It is an opportune time to focus learning in more depth and in specific subjects which pupils have found a particular talent or interest in.

We have found that using this time to specify study in greater depth, whilst maintaining a broad curriculum for all pupils, allows the best opportunity for success in later life.

Parents have the most important role to play in their children's education. Please use this booklet to inform and support the conversations you will be having with your children and their teachers during this important time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'J A Hoarty'.

**Jo-Anne Hoarty**  
Headteacher



# The Options Process



This stage of the options process is for parents and pupils to read this booklet together. This will provide pupils and parents with a full picture and clear guidance to support the subject preferences that are being expressed.

All pupils are encouraged to enter into conversations with subject teachers, form tutors, mentors, year leaders and parents to inform further the decisions being made. Decisions should never be made based on assumptions about subjects, teachers or based on the preferences of friends.

The options process is guided by the preferences of pupils, parents and also by the professional experience we have as teachers. This approach allows pupils, parents and teachers to work together to ensure the most appropriate curriculum for all pupils. It is important that pupils and parents are aware that this does not always result in pupils being placed in their most preferred option, but rather the most appropriate option that will allow them to be most successful. Last year we were pleased to be able to assign 98% of pupils the majority of their preferences. There will also be an opportunity for your child to select an option from the Expressive Arts Suite (PE, Art, Drama, or Music). This will provide all students with the opportunity to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum until the end of the Year 9. However, they may not duplicate their option choice from Option Block 1. Thus maintaining the breadth in their curriculum

After the information evening you will be invited to attend a meeting with a member of the Leadership Group, the Head of Year 8 or the Year 8 Chaplaincy leader. This is a superb opportunity to explore all the options and put forwards your preferences for Year 9. Details of how to book these appointments will be attached to the leaflet and available on our website.

**Susan Kiely**  
**Assistant Headteacher**

# Art



## Pupil specification

*“If you love making art, you’ll miss it when it’s gone. If you choose to study Art, chances are, it will be your favourite class of the day” – Amiria Gale.*

### Pupils studying Art aspire to:

- be willing to explore new ideas and concepts
- be willing to persevere and are able to review and refine their work
- enjoy practising art skills in order to develop their technical ability.

## Why we love Art

- development of technical skills with a wide range of materials
- boosts hand-eye co-ordination
- encourages problem solving skills,
- develops lateral thinking,
- involves complex analysis and critical thinking skills.
- successful pupils of Art become more focused, able communicators with the ability to look at things anew in an organised manner

## Further study and careers

Study in year 9 leads onto GCSE Art and subsequently to our popular A-levels in Art and Photography, from which, many students complete Art related degrees.

In addition to conventional careers such as Architecture, Interior Design or Fine Art related occupations, the development of the internet has created an outburst of exciting, creative, professions. Most businesses have an online presence requiring Web Designers, App Designers, Graphic Designers, Illustrators, Animation Artists, Multimedia Artists to name but a few emerging roles. Adults leaving education who are multi-skilled are more useful, well-rounded, hireable and capable of excelling in a much wider range of professions.

## Further details

Information from the exam board can be found [here](#).

# Drama



## Pupil specification

- ability to collaborate with a range of people
- communication and presentation skills
- evaluation and analysis skills
- building confidence and social skills
- ability to use of a range of stimuli – poetry, music, images, objects and texts
- developing empathy and ability to understand emotional issues
- consideration of different audiences and impact of certain elements
- being keen to experience live theatre

## Why we love Drama

- it's practical, hands on learning
- there are new productions and styles of theatre to explore all the time – these inspire us and our students
- we often use examples of professional theatre companies and practitioners
- seeing students shine in school productions!
- the focus on practical exploration of Drama skills
- making explicit links with other subject areas, particularly English
- the technical elements of theatre e.g. lighting, costume, sound

## Further study and careers

Study in year 9 leads onto GCSE Drama and subsequently to our popular A-level in Drama and Theatre. Study in Drama is beneficial for anyone wanting to build on presentation and confidence in the working world and links very well with other creative and analytical subjects.

Study in Drama will contribute to careers involving public speaking, media and performing arts e.g. Actor, Lawyer, Drama Therapist, Marketing Director, Sales, Advertising, Theatre Designer, Stage Management.

## Further details

Information from the exam board can be found [here](#).

# Music



## Pupil specification

In the words of Albert Einstein: *"The greatest scientists are artists as well"*.

Skills you will need to be a successful performer and musician:

- Reading music from staff notation
- Ability to play a musical instrument, sing or use music technology
- Commitment and creativity

By studying Music, the skills you will develop include:

- confidence
- team-work
- organisation
- problem solving and critical thinking

## Why we love Music

- music is the greatest creation of man, which touches the soul
- music can draw millions of people from different parts of the world and uplift them emotionally
- music can help you express your feelings
- music makes your brain work harder: research indicates the brain of a musician works differently than that of a non-musician. *"When you're a musician and you're playing an instrument, you have to be using more of your brain,"* says Dr. Eric Rasmussen.

## Further study and careers

Study in year 9 leads onto GCSE Music and then to A-level Music. Those graduating from universities with Music degrees have a wide range of career options available to them both inside and outside the industry, including: Performer, Teacher, Administrator, Songwriter, Conductor, Composer, Recording Engineer, Manager, Promoter, Music Publisher or Music Therapist. There are also more jobs than ever in music business related areas, such as: careers in Digital Marketing, Social Media, PR, Technology, Label Services, Ticketing and Merchandising.

## Further details

Information from the exam board can be found [here](#) and [here](#) is a direct link to the GCSE Music specification.

# Physical Education



## Pupil specification

Pupils who find success whilst studying PE:

- play at least one sport outside of school or for the school team
- have an interest in training, diet and preparation for sport
- are intrigued about how the body works within a sporting context
- are able to sustain a good level of physical fitness
- is reflective and can identify strengths and areas to improve in their own and others performances
- can apply knowledge to a wide variety of sporting examples

## Why we love PE

- understanding how our bodies work during exercise and how to progress towards a goal
- learning a range of practical skills and tactics which can be transferred within a number of sports
- the opportunity to perform competitively against others
- enjoy working within a team to achieve an outcome
- links with many other subjects (biology, technology, psychology, sociology)
- provides opportunities to analyse own performance and plan ways to make improvements

## Further study and careers

During your course in Year 9 it will be decided whether you will be entered for the Tech Award in Sport or the OCR GCSE P.E. Study in year 9 can lead onto a range of courses: GCSE PE in years 10 and 11, A-level PE and/or BTEC Sport and Exercise post-16. Study in Physical Education leads to a wide range of careers: PE Teacher, Personal Trainer, Sports and Exercise Coach, Physiotherapist, Nutritionist, Sports Journalist, Dietitian, Sports Psychologist and Sports Analyst, to name a few.

## Further details

Pupils express a preference for a 'Physical Education' course. They will be assigned to the most appropriate course by the Department. Information from the exam board about GCSE PE can be found [here](#).

# Business



## Pupil specification

An effective learner in Business:

- is keen to develop knowledge
- has the ability to apply their understanding to contexts
- is able to analyse business issues
- can evaluate qualitative and quantitative information to make informed judgements
- is organised, shows resilience and perseverance
- “does the best that is possible”.
- makes a sustained contribution to learning, keenly participating in activities and asking thoughtful questions
- displays exceptional care and concern, knowing and understanding that we all learn from each other
- embraces independent learning

## Why we love Business

Business is hugely relevant to ‘real life’ – we are all customers and we will all work in a business organisation during our lifetime.

We are passionate about the interdependent nature of business activity, influences on business, finance, marketing and human resources, and how these interdependencies underpin decision making and, ultimately, business success.

*“Time flew by in the lesson where we had to come up with our own TV advert. We got so wrapped up in what we were doing”.*

*“Looking around the store I realised that all of the workers were doing exactly what we had learnt about in class.”*

## Further study and careers

After a successful year 9, pupils will progress to GCSE Business. Post-16 opportunities include AQA A Level Business and/or Economics. Many pupils then continue their studies at university in a range of disciplines such as Economics, Management, Human Resource Management (HRM), Accountancy or Marketing.

The world is full of possibilities for jobs: Retail Management; Sales and Marketing; Business Ownership; Accountancy; Logistics Management; Public Relations; HRM; Banking; Investment and Financial Services...

## Further details

Information from the exam board can be found [here](#).



# Computer Science



## Pupil specification

An effective learner in Computer Science:

- is keen to develop knowledge
- has the ability to apply their understanding to contexts
- is able to develop and use computational thinking to solve problems
- can evaluate different approaches to solving problems
- is organised, shows resilience and perseverance, especially when programming
- displays exceptional care and concern, knowing and understanding that we all learn from each other
- embraces independent learning
- is not afraid of basic mathematics

## Why we love Computer Science

It is an exciting time to be a Computer Scientist! We are living in the middle of a revolution powered by computers.

Almost all aspects of life have been effected by developments in Computer Science. It is very difficult to imagine a world without:

- social networking
- transportation systems
- medical systems
- commerce/business
- entertainment
- scientific research

*“Programming is a highly creative process. We were given the same problem but every single person in the class came up with unique solutions”*

## Further study and careers

After a successful Year 9, pupils progress to GCSE Computer Science. Post-16 opportunities include Computer Science at A Level. Many pupils then continue their studies at university in Computer Science or a similar programme such as IT, Web Design, Games Programming, Cyber-Security or Software Engineering.

Many students go on to become Computer Scientists, Software Engineers, Programmers, Games Developers, Project Managers, Web Developers, Cyber-Security Analysts etc.

## Further details

Information from the exam board can be found [here](#).

# Separate Science



## Pupil specification

- show confident application of Maths skills when solving unfamiliar problems
- use imagination to visualise
- write concisely to explain
- relish being independent when learning
- really enjoy the chance to work collaboratively
- actively contribute to classroom discussions
- consistently use and understand complex subject vocabulary
- follow instructions (very important in practical work!)
- able to analyse data to conclude and evaluate practical work

## Why we love Separate Science

- explains the why and the how of the world around us
- Science allows us to think logically about how the world works and how people function
- it allows us to make more informed decisions about our lifestyle in order to make more informed choices
- gives us skills that can be applied across the curriculum to many other subjects
- highly collaborative
- opens the doors to endless possibilities.

## Further study and careers

Successful study during year 9 leads on to separate science GCSEs (three Science GCSEs). Post-16 pupils can continue studying all three Sciences at A-level and also on vocational Science courses. Study in Science can lead to careers in: Microbiology - Geology - Engineering - Physiotherapy - Marine Biology - Architecture - Research Science - Pharmacology - ICT based careers - Radiography - Investment and banking - Occupational Therapy - Paramedic - Pharmacy – Botanist - Astronomer - Agriculture - Veterinary Science - Astrobiologist – Geneticist - Nanotechnologist - Pathologist - Sports Science - Scientific Journalist - Nature Reserve Ranger (to name a few!).

## Further details

Please follow these links to read further information from the exam boards about [Biology](#), [Chemistry](#) and [Physics](#).

# Sociology



## Pupil specification

Sociologists must have an open mind and enjoy the challenge of learning about new ideas which are present within existing literature and personal experiences. Sociologists are pushed to collaborate with their peers so that they can question the world around them and develop their own understanding of the complexities of society

The most effective Sociologists don't stand still but keep up to date with current social issues and societal changes. This may range from a political change, to a rise in crime or even the increased educational underachievement of a particular social group.

## Why we love Sociology

Sociology provides you with an opportunity to seek answers to questions about social systems and processes. We love analysing society so that we can provide answers to these questions and make sense of the world in which we live.

Why do men appear to commit more crime compared to women?

Has childhood improved over the past 50 years?

Is society a fair system in which everybody receives a fair chance?

We structure our lessons around you and we love to hear about your own experiences.

## Further study and careers

After progressing through year 9, pupils study GCSE Sociology. We provide the opportunity to continue studying A-Level Sociology at sixth form, allowing students to explore topics in greater detail and conduct their own research into areas of interest. Alongside Sociology, there is the opportunity to study Psychology and BTEC Health and Social Care which both compliment and support Sociology.

A range of Universities offer a host of Sociology courses which provide some exciting career options, including: Social work, Human resources, Advertising, Policing, Marketing, Journalism, Law and Teaching.

## Further details

Information from the exam board can be found [here](#).

## What next for pupils and parents

Now that you've read the options booklet and hopefully attended the information evening, it is time to start doing some research, talking to teachers, parents, form tutors, mentors and year leaders. This will all help inform your decision making.

Please do not make any decisions based on assumptions, rumours or hearsay. Please do ask your teachers questions so you can find out the facts

## What next for parents?

The best way to support your child through this important decision making process is by carrying out further reading and research with them. Please try to avoid passing on any biases and avoid making stereotypical assumptions about subjects based on your own experiences at school. Please log onto the school's booking system:

<https://stpaulscatholicsschool.schoolcloud.co.uk/>

Here you will be given the opportunity to make an appointment in the usual way and given the opportunity in the 'notes' section to state whether you would prefer this meeting to be online or face to face.

**Susan KIELTY**  
**Assistant Headteacher**