



WYCHWOOD

SCHOOL • OXFORD

**GCSE Courses
Booklet**

2024 - 2026

GCSE Courses at Wychwood

This booklet summarises the various GCSE courses running and is intended to help you in deciding which subjects you wish to study for the next two years.

At Wychwood most pupils take 9.5 subjects at GCSE. Variations on this are sometimes possible on an individual basis. In order to provide breadth and balance the compulsory core curriculum consists of English (including English literature), mathematics, and science. All pupils also study non-GCSE PE and PSHE. Pupils should then choose from the subjects available. We recommend a modern foreign language, humanity and creative subject in order to keep options open in the future.

Pupils are asked to list their choices in order of preference so we can write the best timetable possible. We make every effort to prevent and minimise timetable clashes, and when they do occur we discuss them with the individual pupils concerned and help them to look for alternative choices. Subject choices all need to be returned by 1st March.

Why study computer science?

You are growing up in a world where technology is evolving rapidly, changing the way that people work in every area from medicine and fashion to engineering and economics. Whatever your career plans, it is useful to develop a deeper understanding of technology. Many disciplines now use computing extensively and studying this subject will allow you to be more effective in many different jobs.

GCSE computer science is an excellent opportunity to investigate how computers work and develop skills in computer programming and problem solving. This two-unit course gives you an in-depth understanding of a range of computing concepts, skills and issues.

Who will enjoy it?

You need to be able to think logically and enjoy solving puzzles. Computer science is not just a scientific subject, it is also a creative subject, and you will get a sense of satisfaction from making programs work. If you enjoy creating games, designing apps or programming in general, then computer science could be for you. We do not expect you to start the course as experienced programmers. All we ask is that you are willing to work hard and persevere when your code doesn't work.

What skills will I get from it?

This course will help you to learn about critical thinking, analysis and problem solving. Skills that can be transferred into other subjects and applied in day-to-day life.

The course is divided into two units. Both units are assessed through a final written examination, each worth 50% of the final mark. Questions will be a mix of short and medium answer questions with limited extended response questions. The course includes a significant amount of practical work.

What will I learn?

You will look at computer systems and will learn about hardware and software, the representation of data in computer systems, networking and more.

How could it help with my future?

Studying computer science will give you valuable thinking and programming skills that are extremely attractive in the workplace. Careers in robotics, design, engineering, finance, science and medicine are all open to you.

Which examination board will I follow?

OCR J277 GCSE Computer Science (9-1)

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/>

Sufficient pupils must opt for this course for it to run.

GCSE Drama encourages pupils to develop a variety of creative skills including acting, improvisation, analysis, group work and communication.

The pupils will learn to respond to a variety of stimuli, encouraging the expression of ideas and meanings through the language of drama. They will explore a range of drama forms - recognising them in others' work through group and individual activities. Script work will be used to aid understanding of how practitioners realise text in performance, as well as giving the pupil opportunity to develop their own performance skills.

Assessment takes place in the final term of Year 10 and throughout Year 11 in the following ways:

Component 1: Devising (Coursework: 40% of the qualification)

- Create and develop a devised piece from a stimulus.
- Performance of this devised piece or design realisation for this performance.
- Analyse and evaluate the devising process and performance.
- Performer or designer routes available.

Assessment overview

Internally assessed and externally moderated. There are two parts to the assessment:

1. A portfolio covering the creating and developing process and analysis and evaluation of this process. The portfolio submission recommendations are: can be handwritten/typed evidence between 1500-2000 words OR can be recorded/verbal evidence between 8-10 minutes OR can be a combination of handwritten/typed evidence (between 750-1000 words) and recorded/verbal evidence (between 4-5 minutes)
2. A devised performance/design realisation (15 marks, assessing AO2).

Component 2: Performance from Text (Coursework: 20% of the qualification)

- Pupils will either perform in and/or design for two key extracts from a performance text.
- Performer or designer routes available.

Assessment overview

Externally assessed by visiting examiner.

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice (Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes)

40% of the qualification

- Practical exploration and study of one complete performance text.
- Live theatre evaluation - free choice of production.

Assessment overview

- Section A: Bringing Texts to Life. This section consists of one question broken into six parts (short and extended responses) based on an unseen extract from the chosen performance text.
- Section B: Live Theatre Evaluation
- This section consists of two questions requiring pupils to analyse and evaluate a live theatre performance they have seen.

English Language

AQA 8700

English language is taken with English literature and there are two English language classes to allow the specific needs of our pupils to be met. For our EAL pupils an alternative option of Cambridge IGCSE (0991) ESL may be offered.

For GCSE English language pupils will read fluently, and with good understanding, a wide range of texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, including literature and literary non-fiction as well as other writing such as reviews and journalism. These will be read and evaluated critically and comparisons will be made between texts. Pupils will summarise and synthesise information or ideas from texts and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing.

They will write accurately, effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately. Pupils will also be expected to listen to and understand spoken language, and use spoken Standard English effectively.

The final mark and numerical grade of this linear course will be drawn from performance in two equally weighted examinations of 1 ¾ hours at the end of Shell (Year 11). The reading and writing component of each paper has equal weighting.

The first examination is on 'explorations in creative reading and writing' and aims to engage the pupils in a creative text and to inspire them to write creatively themselves.

The second examination on 'writers' viewpoints and perspectives' aims to develop the pupils' insights into how writers have particular viewpoints and perspectives on issues or themes that are important to the way we think and live our lives. Pupils will compare linked sources and they will be encouraged to express their own viewpoints on the same theme.

Please note that whilst the Spoken Language endorsement of this qualification will be reported on as part of the qualification, it will not form part of the final mark and grade.

Ms B Sherlock BA (Hons) M.Ed PGCE

English Literature

AQA 8702

The course aims to encourage pupils to read, understand and respond to a wide range of literature, drawn from contemporary and modern texts, and texts which have a significant influence on our English literary and cultural heritage. Pupils will develop the skills necessary for literary study. Those who choose this course should be prepared to read widely and independently to strengthen their understanding and to acquire a more mature and fluent written style, both essential foundations for future advanced studies in English literature.

English literature is a 'facilitating subject' for the purposes of university applications. Many universities require English literature GCSE as part of the GCSE portfolio. In order to study English literature at A Level, pupils will need to have taken the GCSE course.

The course comprises the study of a Shakespeare play and a nineteenth century novel accounting for 40% of the overall grade and examined in a 1 ¾ hour closed book examination paper. Modern (from 1914 onwards) British fiction or drama, a poetry anthology from 1789 including representative Romantic poems to the present day and a response to unseen poetry accounts for 60% of the GCSE and is examined in a 2 ¼ hour closed book examination.

Likely texts to be studied are:

Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' or 'The Merchant of Venice'

Robert Louis Stevenson's 'Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde'

J.B. Priestley's 'An Inspector Calls'

The Love and Relationships poetry cluster featuring works by Byron, Shelley, Browning, Barrett-Browning, Hardy, Bridges, Mew, Causley, Heaney, Armitage, Duffy, Sheers, Nagra and Waterhouse.

Further poetry is studied in preparation for the response to unseen poetry.

Ms B Sherlock BA (Hons) M.Ed PGCE

The Cambridge IGCSE ESL course is an alternative English course designed for pupils whose native language is not English. The aims are to:

- develop learners' ability to use English effectively for the purpose of practical communication
- develop learners' awareness of the nature of language and language-learning skills
- develop transferable skills to complement other areas of the curriculum
- promote learners' personal development and enjoyment.

Content overview

Cambridge IGCSE (9-1) English as a Second Language offers learners the opportunity to develop practical communication skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking. Learners will be presented with a variety of texts that will build up their skills in reading and writing. They will learn to select relevant details, understand the difference between what is directly stated and implied, and practise writing for different purposes and audiences. Learners will listen to a range of spoken material, including talks and conversations, to develop listening skills. Learners will engage in conversations on a variety of topics and develop their skills in responding to different situations and audiences with a degree of accuracy and clarity.

Cambridge IGCSE (9-1) English as a Second Language will enable learners to become independent users of English both to support further study and to communicate effectively in a variety of practical contexts.

Ms J Bettridge Cert. Ed. TESOL Cert.

Fine Art

Edexcel 1FA0

The Art and Design (Fine Art) GCSE is examined on the basis of Component 1: a personal portfolio (60%), completed throughout the course during art lessons, and Component 2: an externally set assignment (40%) - on a theme which will be explored, researched and responded to during from January in the Shell year (Year 11). This culminates in a supervised 10 hour exam at the end of the Hilary term.

Pupils produce their portfolio of coursework over the two years and build up a collection of sketches, studies, paintings and allied material. This, along with their externally set assignment is marked internally, and then moderated externally by a visiting examiner from the board, at the end of the course.

The syllabus is based on a strong core of 2D work: painting and drawing in a variety of materials to develop a wide range of technical skills. The traditional language of art and design: line, tone, form, texture, colour, etc., will be explored, and the use of sketch/work books forms an important part of the course. Visits are made to galleries and museums, either as a starting point for projects or where the exhibition is thought to be a valuable experience for any pupil working in this area. Some history of art will be studied to cultivate an appreciation of painting and drawing from different periods and cultures.

Pupils are encouraged to work in much greater depth on a project than before, thinking, researching and planning for themselves. Consequently they develop a strong and confident personal style. This mature approach to the subject leads naturally on to A Level art and beyond, to Foundation and then Degree level work.

Ms A Wardell BA (Hons) MA

Geography plays a vital role in understanding and managing some of the most pressing challenges facing us today. Over the coming years, our world will be changing faster than ever before, affecting individuals, communities, nations and the planet as a whole. Geography in the 21st century is central to understanding the causes of these changes and their consequences in different places. This also includes the problems posed for the sustainable futures of societies, resources and landscapes. The world will need geographers to make a difference. To understand the issues that will arise and the solutions that are needed to save the world.

We have chosen the new AQA specification because in the words of the examination board:

“Students will travel the world from the classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom (UK), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs). Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.”

There are four areas to the course: Living with the physical environment, Living in the human environment, Geographical applications and Geographical skills.

- Each of the first two areas will be assessed by way of a written examination of 1 hour 30 minutes, with each paper being 35% of the overall qualification.
- The Geographical applications will be assessed through a 1 hour written examination, which accounts for the remaining 30% of the course.
- The Geographical skills will be assessed across the three written papers.
- The examinations will include a mixture of question types including multiple-choice, short answer, levels of response and extended prose.

Subject content details

Living with the physical environment

Section A: The challenge of natural hazards

Section B: Physical landscapes in the UK

Section C: The living world

Living in the human environment

Section A: Urban issues and challenges

Section B: The changing economic world

Section C: The challenge of resource management

Geographical applications

Section A: Issue evaluation

Section B: Fieldwork

Geographical skills

The specification will be taught linearly with the physical environment occupying the UT year and the human environment in the Shell year. The pupils will also complete two geographical enquiries, which will include collecting primary data outside the school in contrasting environments. Pupils currently undertake a long weekend of field work, that is integral to the course.

The GCSE history course contains 4 separate topics, in two assessments:

Understanding the Modern World

1. Section A

America, 1920-1973: Opportunity and inequality

This period study focuses on the development of the USA during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of opportunity and inequality - when some Americans lived the 'American Dream' whilst others grappled with the nightmare of poverty, discrimination and prejudice.

2. Section B

Conflict and tension between East and West, 1945-1972

This wider world depth study focuses on the causes and events of the Cold War and seeks to show how and why conflict occurred and why it proved difficult to resolve the tensions which arose between America and the Soviet Union.

Shaping the Nation

3. Section A

Britain: health and the people

In this study the pupils will gain an overview of the main changes and the trends in medicine and public health in Britain from 1100 to the present. We will study key individuals such as Hippocrates and Pasteur and look at factors that enabled them to make their contributions. We consider issues such as war, religion, chance, technology and government and evaluate the importance of these.

4. Section B

Elizabethan England, 1568-1603

This concentrates on various aspects of the government, life and culture of the England of Elizabeth I. We will explore and appreciate the important characteristics and dynamics of the period. This study offers a contrast of cultures, not only between rich and poor within the period, but also between the Elizabethans and ourselves. The pupils will also be examined on a specific site, such as a Tudor manor house, which will enrich their understanding of Elizabethan England.

Understanding the Modern World and Shaping the Nation are assessed in two separate exams, each providing 50% of the final mark.

This course aims to build up a detailed knowledge of events and ideas on a variety of periods and also encourages the pupil to analyse and evaluate people's actions. Active participation is encouraged from each pupil in class discussion and in the use of sources, and there is always at least one topic that each pupil finds particularly enjoyable.

Mrs B A Walster BMus (Hons) PGCE

The Latin GCSE course has been designed to help pupils develop their understanding of the Latin language and the related ancient literature, values and society.

There are three main elements to the course:

Language is a compulsory component and is worth 50% of the total GCSE. Pupils build their knowledge of vocabulary and linguistic structures as well as becoming familiar with core vocabulary and grammar.

The other 50% of the GCSE consists of optional components. Prose literature and verse literature make up four of these components, with pupils studying a set text or group of texts, totalling between 110 and 120 lines in length.

Literature and culture is also an optional component in which pupils study the prescribed ancient source material covering two themes of civilisation and culture. The study of these prescribed sources is supplemented with other ancient sources covering the same theme.

The course gives pupils the opportunity to develop linguistic skills which will help both in the study and application of English and other languages. They will gain an insight into the life and culture of the ancient world. They will also be encouraged to develop and apply critical analytical skills which will help them in their future studies in arts, humanities and sciences.

Above all, the aim of the course is to encourage pupils to develop a life-long enthusiasm for the classical world.

Ms O Goodrich BA (Hons) PGCE MA

Mathematics

Edexcel International GCSE (Mathematics A)

Mathematics is a vital qualification for all job applications in later life. You will develop foundations for further study at A Level in mathematics and related subjects such as the sciences. In addition you will learn problem solving techniques and to think logically. At Wychwood, we prepare pupils for the Edexcel International GCSE in Mathematics, following the Mathematics A course. The content is similar to GCSE mathematics, but with less emphasis on Statistics and more on Algebra and related topics. More information is available on the Edexcel website at <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-international-gcses-and-edexcel-certificates/international-gcse-mathematics-a-2016.html>

There are two tiers of entry, Foundation and Higher. It is expected that usually most pupils will be entered for the Higher Tier examinations. Assessment is currently through two examinations taken at the end of the Shell (Year 11). There are no controlled assessments for the International GCSE in Mathematics.

Mrs V Mackay BSc (Hons) PGCE MSc (Oxon)

Modern Languages

French AQA 8658

Spanish AQA 8698

The new GCSE (9-1) Modern Foreign Languages specifications focuses on a skills-based approach to learning which aims to create confident linguists in both spoken and written contexts.

It is a linear GCSE with assessments at the end of the two-year course in June. Learners must sit exams in all four skills at the same tier and examinations are marked by external examiners only.

We want to encourage a positive approach to languages, so that pupils will use their skills practically in authentic situations. We aim to provide a teaching of MFL that will enable pupils to show a real understanding of the foreign culture and environment, as well as the language.

We expect that all language pupils will attend the trips that we organise to France and Spain on a regular basis as this will bring the language to life.

Pupils must complete all 4 components to be awarded the GCSE (9-1) Modern Foreign Languages in French and Spanish.

Listening	Written exam: 35 minutes (Foundation Tier) 45 minutes (Higher Tier) 40 marks (Foundation Tier) 50 marks (Higher Tier)	25% of total GCSE
Speaking	Non-exam assessment: 7-9 minutes (Foundation Tier) 10-12 minutes (Higher Tier) 60 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher Tier)	25% of total GCSE
Reading	Written exam: 45 minutes (Foundation Tier) 1 hour (Higher Tier) 60 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher Tier)	25% of total GCSE
Writing	Written exam: 1 hour (Foundation Tier) 1 hour 15 minutes (Higher Tier) 50 marks (Foundation Tier) 60 marks (Higher Tier)	25% of total GCSE

Content

The new GCSE contains translation both from English into target language and from target language into English as well as Literature as part of the assessment. There are three main themes:

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

Mr L Jimenez LLB MA

NB. Pupils should have at least one instrument to offer for GCSE music, which can be voice. In addition to the GCSE lessons, pupils must also take a weekly instrumental or vocal lesson, either in school or with a private external teacher. There is an additional charge for instrumental lessons taken at Wychwood.

What does the course involve?

There are four areas of study:

- Instrumental Music 1700-1820
- Vocal Music
- Music for Stage and Screen
- Fusions

These are studied in three units:

Unit 1: Performing (30%)

- Pupils perform for at least four minutes' combined duration
- Solo performance: this must be of at least one minute in duration and may comprise one or more pieces.
- Ensemble performance: this must be of at least one minute in duration and may comprise one or more pieces.

Unit 2: Composing (30%)

- Pupils compose two compositions, of at least three minutes combined duration
- One composition is to a brief set by the examination board, of at least one minute in duration.
- One free composition to a brief set by the pupil, of at least one minute in duration.

Unit 3: Appraising (40%)

- This unit is assessed in a written examination at the end of the course. The length of the examination is one hour and forty-five minutes. During the examination, a CD with the musical extracts for each question is played to the pupils a set number of times. Pupils respond to questions based around the eight set works they have studied and a number of unfamiliar pieces.
- The paper is made up of two sections and is out of a total of 80 marks.
- In section A, there are six questions about the set works, a rhythmic/melodic dictation exercise and a question on an unfamiliar piece.
- In section B, there is one extended essay question that asks pupils to compare and/or evaluate the musical elements, musical contexts and musical language of one set work with one unfamiliar piece of music.

This is a course that will expand a pupil's knowledge of music. They can expect to enjoy studying and listening to an interesting cross-section of styles and types of music, as well as writing their own music and performing both as a soloist and in groups.

Mrs B A Walster BMus (Hons) PGCE

Photography

Edexcel 1PY0

Photography is a practical course which provides pupils with the opportunity to be creative, expressive and imaginative in a wide variety of lens-based contexts. As well as lessons pupils will be taken on appropriate workshop and exhibition trips. They will also be expected to work regularly outside the classroom.

Current GCSE pupils produce a series of projects over the course of their two years of study, on the themes of Portraiture, Still Life, Landscape, Architecture, Alternative Processes and Collage/Montage. As well as using Photoshop and iPhoto pupils will be introduced to iMovie and encouraged to make at least one short film or stop frame animation. Within this course framework pupils will be encouraged to employ techniques that they have been taught, refer to the work of artists discussed in lessons and explore their own particular interests and talents.

GCSE photography has the potential to enable pupils to make a personal response to their own individual experiences, environments and culture. On a wider theme, the subject will enhance their understanding and provide practical experience of the role, purpose and function of photography in society. The course offers a thorough foundation for study at A Level, a valuable skill that can be used across all visual arts practice as well as an exciting interest or hobby that can be carried on in later life.

Pupils will need their own Digital SLR camera for the majority of their practical work as well as a suitable camera memory card and a USB for their work storage. They may work on their own laptops or iPads if they wish. There is no additional materials charge for this course.

Mr M Pennington MA (RCA) Photography

We follow the AQA GCSE Physical Education syllabus which covers a wide range of theoretical as well as practical elements. The theoretical side consists of two written papers, which is taken at the end of the course, carrying 60% of the total mark.

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport**What is assessed:**

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Use of data

How it is assessed:

- Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
- Total: 78 marks = 30% of GCSE

Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport**What is assessed:**

- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and well-being
- Use of data

How it is assessed:

- Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
- Total: 78 marks = 30% of GCSE

Practical performance in physical activity and sport**What is assessed:**

- Pupils are assessed as a player/performer in **three** different activities plus
- Written/verbal analysis and evaluation of performance

How it is assessed:

- Internal assessment, external moderation
- Total: 100 marks = 40% of GCSE

The practical unit is assessed in both Upper Transits (Year 10) and Shell (year 11) as a continuous practical assessment. Pupils choose **three practical sports** to be assessed in over the course. These must include one individual sport and one team sport. The third assessment can be either an individual sport or a team sport. Pupils need to be capable of taking part in a wide range of sporting activities at a good standard. This could involve playing in a school team, umpiring games or organising teams, among other possibilities. **Pupils should also be taking part in one or more of their chosen sports at a higher level, which should take place outside of school in a club.**

The physical education course overall could be an asset to anyone wanting a career in many sport related professions, the leisure industry or primary/secondary teaching.

NB. Sufficient pupils must opt for this course to allow it to run.

Miss F Centamore BSc (Hons) PGCE

Psychology AQA GCSE 8182

What makes people behave the way they do? Studying psychology will help you to understand some of the many different views and explanations which have been put forward to answer this question.

Studying psychology will enable you to develop both subject-specific and generic academic skills which will be useful across all of your subjects, including:

The acquisition of knowledge and understanding of psychology, developing an understanding of self and others, and how psychological understanding can help to explain everyday social phenomena.

The presentation of information, development of arguments and conclusions through a critical approach to psychological evidence; development as reflective thinkers

Understanding of how psychological research is conducted, including the role of scientific method and data analysis.

The development of an understanding of the relationship between psychology and personal, moral, social and cultural issues, and of an understanding of ethical issues in psychology.

The development of an understanding of psychological issues, the contribution of psychology to individual, social and cultural diversity, and how psychology contributes to society.

Overview of specification:

Memory

Perception

Development

Research methods

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes 100 marks 50% of total GCSE

Social influence

Language, thought and communication

Brain and

neuropsychology

Psychological problems

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes 100 marks 50% of total GCSE

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

Mr A Mohammed BSc (Hons) QTS PGCE MSc (Oxon)

Religious Studies

AQA Short Course RS GCSE

This course builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills established in religious studies in Years 7, 8 and 9 (Remove, Inters and Lower Transits). It is a part of the core curriculum which all pupils will follow and leads to a half GCSE. This is the same level of difficulty of a full GCSE but half the content.

Aims

- To acquire knowledge and develop understanding of the beliefs, values and traditions of Christianity and Islam
- To consider religious and non-religious responses to moral issues arising from studying the following themes:
Relationships and Families
Religion, Peace and Conflict

This course will cover a number of important issues and will give the pupils an opportunity to develop and express their views through discussion, debate and reasoned essay writing.

Religious studies is assessed through one examination at the end of two years, which is 1 hour 45 minutes long.

Pupils will be able to progress on to the A Level Philosophy and Ethics Religious Studies course, having taken the short course GCSE.

Mrs C Crossley BA Theology (Hons) PGCE
Postgraduate Diploma in Jewish-Christian Relations

Science

AQA

The science department at Wychwood School is dedicated to providing pupils with a comprehensive and engaging education in the natural sciences. Through hands-on experiments, collaborative projects, and real-world problem-solving, we strive to foster a lifelong love of learning and a deep understanding of the scientific principles that shape our world. We are committed to equipping our pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in an increasingly technological society.

There are two different AQA courses at GCSE

- Trilogy Science (leading to two GCSEs and covering elements from Physics, Chemistry and Biology)
- Triple science
 - Biology GCSE
 - Chemistry GCSE
 - Physics GCSE

GCSE begins in the Lower Transits (Year 9) and is taught as three separate subjects by subject specialists. In the Upper Transits (Year 10) pupils can choose to follow the triple or trilogy program. Practical work forms an integral part of both courses with the aim of developing strong experimental and investigative skills.

All courses prepare pupils for A Level sciences, but those knowing in advance that they would like to study them should choose the triple science option.

Edexcel GCSE Astronomy 1AS0

Most people are fascinated by the night sky and are interested in stories about our continuing exploration of our Solar System and Universe. This course has been developed to build on that interest and to give an introduction to the subject of astronomy. The course will enable students to understand our position in the Universe, the movements of planets and stars, the cycles in the night and daytime sky, and the way in which we use technology to observe and interact with space. Students will follow an incredible story of how scientists, from ancient civilisations to the modern day, have used their imagination and carefully recorded visual measurement to explore the Universe in which we live.

If you enjoy observing the night sky, have an aptitude for mathematics, and want to learn more about our place in the universe, then a GCSE course in astronomy may be of interest to you.

Mrs R Humphreys BSc (Hons) PGCE

Textiles

Edexcel 1TE0

The Art and Design (Textiles) GCSE is examined on the basis of Component 1: a personal portfolio (60%), completed throughout the course during textiles lessons, and Component 2: an externally set assignment (40%) - on a theme which will be explored, researched and responded to from January in the Shell year (Year 11). This culminates in a supervised 10 hour exam at the end of the Hilary term.

During the course, pupils will be introduced to a variety of creative fabric techniques such as print, stitch, dying, embellishment and innovative manipulation techniques. They will experience the work of other textile artists by visiting exhibitions to expand their creativeness and understanding of this subject. The focus of the course encourages research and development of ideas through a variety of creative processes and pupils need to research their subject from historical, cultural and contemporary perspectives.

Work can develop and evolve in either two or three dimensions. Textiles is a versatile practice that involves the creation, selection, manipulation and application of a range of materials such as fibers, yarns and fabrics.

Throughout the two years pupils are encouraged to develop a personal style involving sustained research and exploration of ideas and to process these ideas into resolved textile pieces.

A number of trips to exhibitions are undertaken during the two years.

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Mrs S McCullagh

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

Established in 1956 by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and opened to pupils in 1958, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a life-changing experience for participants. Based on Kurt Hahn's philosophy that young people possess an innate sense of morality and decency that should be cultivated, the Award encourages young people to partake in self-improvement through developing a skill, a passion for sport and by helping within their community. The Award is split into three stages: Bronze, Silver and Gold and each stage is gained by completing a personal programme of activities in four sections:

- Volunteering: undertaking service to individuals or the community
- Physical: improving in an area of sport, dance or fitness activities
- Skills: developing practical and social skills and personal interests
- Expedition: planning, training for and completion of an adventurous journey in the UK or abroad (last year the pupils went to the Southern Chiltern Hill and the Lambourn Downs).

The timescales necessary for completing Bronze and Silver are below:

Bronze (Lower Transits (Year 9) upwards)

Volunteering	Physical	Skills	Expedition
3 months	3 months	3 months	Plan, train for and undertake a 2 day, 1 night expedition.
All participants must undertake a further 3 months in the Volunteering, Physical or Skills sections.			

Silver (Upper Transits (Year 10) upwards)

Volunteering	Physical	Skills	Expedition
6 months	One section for 6 months and the other section for 3 months.		Plan, train for and undertake a 3 day, 2 night expedition.
Direct entrants must undertake a further 6 months in either the Volunteering or the longer of the Physical or Skills section.			

When picking their activities, the pupils have a wide variety of options. It is highly likely that they are already participating in something that can be used for a section of their Award. Learning a musical instrument is always a popular choice for their Skills while playing in various sports teams within Wychwood can be used for Physical. There are also ample opportunities within school and the local community for the pupils to work on. For the expedition, we work with Adventure Plus an Approved Activities Provider with the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. They provide training, instructors and camping equipment for the pupils.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is highly valued by university admissions' tutors and employers as it provides evidence of life skills. Beginning with Bronze, before working through Silver and Gold, pupils demonstrate a considerable level of dedication and commitment. It is an excellent addition to a personal statement. More than this though, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award provides you with many unforgettable experiences and opportunities for personal development.

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