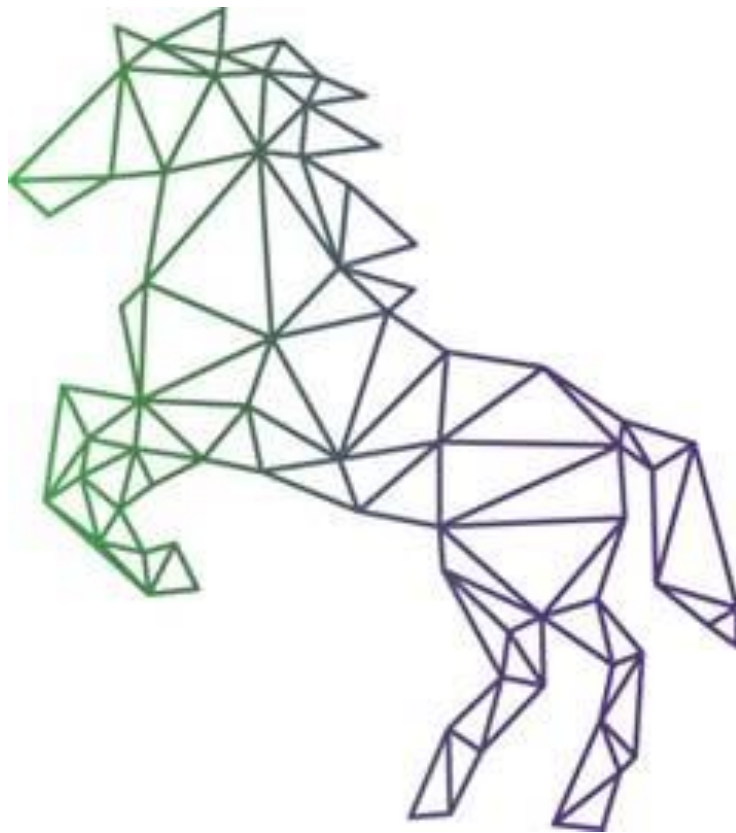


**Year 8 into 9:
Option Choices
2026-2027**



**Student Guide
Year 8 into 9: Option Choices 2026-2027**

Dear Students:

*This booklet gives you information about the subject choices that you will make this year for some of the courses that you will start in September (Year 9). It is important that the subjects you choose to do are the right ones for you — the ones you will be happy and successful doing. This booklet gives details about these subjects and advice about how to make the right choices. My advice to you is very simple; focus on the areas that you have already been told you are doing well in. Don't make choices just because you want to be with your friends – think about your future plans. An online link and guidance will be emailed to your school email address soon for you to complete your choices form and this must be completed **on or before Monday 2 March 2026**.*

Dear Parents/Carers:

The options process is an exceptionally important phase in our students' school life. Students have an opportunity to influence their own destiny and choose subjects that will shape the remainder of their educational lives. We recognise that making these decisions, whilst thinking about further education and future career choices, can be difficult. However, students and their parents/carers should rest assured, knowing that we are keen to provide lots of further guidance and advice during the coming weeks. Please read through this booklet and talk to the relevant Course Leaders and subject teachers, or email info@horsforthschool.org FAO Mrs Comiskey if you have questions about any aspect of the process.

Mrs Comiskey (Deputy Headteacher)

The Core Curriculum Offer:

All of our students will continue to study the following Core subjects in Year 9:

- **English**
- **Mathematics**
- **Science**
- **Modern Foreign Language** (French, Spanish or Chinese – whatever they started in Year 7)
- **Religious Studies**
- **Core PE**
- **Core Digital Literacy**
- **PSHCE**

Selecting options:

In addition to the Core Curriculum we ask all Year 8 students to choose which subjects they would like to continue to study in Year 9 as follows:

Humanities option:

All students must select a humanities subject to study in Years 9-11. This should be either Geography or History. Some students may choose to do both humanities subjects (Dual option). If they wish to do this they must choose Geography as their humanities option and History as one of their 3 depth option choices (see details below). Please see pages 3-5 of this booklet for information about the Humanities options.

Depth subjects:

We ask all Year 8 students to select 3 Depth subjects that they would like to study in Year 9. This allows students to study some subjects in greater depth before they pick their final two GCSE options to study in Year 10 and 11. Year 8 students need to select **3 Depth Subjects plus one reserve choice**. Information about each of the Depth subjects on offer can be found on pages 6 onwards of this booklet.

All students are required to make **1 Humanities choice** and **3 Depth subject choices + 1 reserve**.

Disclaimer – please note:

- Courses will only run if there is sufficient student demand and the course is economically viable
- The number of classes and students in classes may have to be limited for practical or economic reasons meaning that some courses may have limited places
- Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee you will be allocated all of your choices
- The final decision must, of course, rest with the school
- Opting for a course does not necessarily guarantee entry for a particular examination at the end of that course; this will depend upon student progress over two years
- An oversubscribed subject will be allocated to the students with positive attitudes to learning first

Important Dates in the Options Process:

Date	Event	Key information
Week beginning: Monday 26 January	Year 8 options assemblies for students	Students will be briefed about their option choices and curriculum for Year 9 over 5 days of assemblies. Students will also be emailed a copy of this Options Support booklet to support their choices.
Thursday 5 February (6.45 – 8.00pm)	Year 8-9 Options Support evening	A main presentation in the school hall at 6.45pm and again at 7.15pm followed by subject stalls for students and parent/carers to ask questions and gather information to support them in the options process.
Monday 2 March	Option choices deadline	The deadline for all option choices to be made online.

Support with the Options process:

- If you have a question regarding option choices, please e-mail info@horsforthschool.org marked FAO Mrs Comiskey
- If you can't log on to the online system, please e-mail datateam@horsforthschool.org for technical support.

Humanities Subject Options:

All students must select a humanities subject to study in Years 9-11.

This should be either Geography or History or both (Dual option).

They should select the humanities option (Major) they would like to continue on into Year 10 and 11 and to study at GCSE. In Year 9 they will study this option for 3 hours a fortnight. They will also continue to study the other humanities subject (Minor) in Year 9 only, for 1 hour a fortnight. At the end of Year 9 they will drop this subject and continue to take their Major humanities option as a GCSE.

Some students may however choose to do both (dual) humanities subjects in Year 9 – if they wish to do this, they must choose Geography as their humanities option and History as one of their 3 depth option choices. This will then leave them only 2 further depth choices to make. They can then decide at the end of Year 9 if they wish to continue taking both at GCSE or if they wish to drop one of the humanities subjects they have studied in favour of another options subject at GCSE. They do not need to make this decision until their second options process takes place in Year 9.

Humanities Options Subject: Geography

Leads to: AQA GCSE Geography

Curriculum Leader: Mr D Heaton

Why Geography?

“Geography is the subject which holds the key to our future” Michael Palin

Geography helps you to make sense of the world around you. It is hands on and it is relevant. The course will give you the chance to get to grips with some of the big questions which affect our world, and understand the social, economic and physical forces and processes which shape and change our world. Fieldwork is a really important part of geography. You will get the chance to undertake fieldwork at two contrasting sites, these include the Holderness Coast and an urban based study in Leeds. It is a brilliant opportunity to experience some of the things you have learnt about in class, see things differently and of course have fun. We will also be offering international trips to both Iceland (2027) and The Bay of Naples (2028). Students that take geography to graduate level are among the most employable because they possess the skills that many employers look for. In part, this is because the subject is a combination of so many elements.

What will we study?

The course will be split into physical geography and human geography.

Living with the Physical Environment

- **Section A: The challenge of natural hazards**
In this section students will study the following natural hazards; volcanoes, earthquakes and tropical storms. This will include how and where they happen, the effects and how they are managed. It will also include climate change and issues associated with global warming.
- **Section B: The living world**
Students will cover topics such as ecosystems in the UK and tropical rainforests. They will consider how they are under threat and how they are managed. It also will include cold environment and how these areas are used and managed by people.
- **Section C: Physical landscapes in the UK**
This section will introduce students to the variety of landscapes that exist in the UK. It will focus on the processes and landforms connected with coastal and glaciated landscapes through physical processes and the increased impact of human activity.

Challenges in the Human Environment

- **Section A: Urban Issues and Challenges**
Students will look at the different rates of growth in urban areas around the world and consider the different reasons for the growth. They will study how growth and change has brought opportunities and challenges to cities around the world.
- **Section B: The Changing Economic World**
Students will cover the causes and consequences of uneven global development. It will focus in depth on the challenges that face developing countries and how to reduce the development gap.
- **Section C: The Challenge of Resource Management**

This section looks at the changing demand of resources within the UK. It focuses on global water resources and their supply and demand and how shortages could lead to conflict. It then looks at how more sustainable use of water could help combat these problems.

Geographical Applications

- **Section A: Issues Evaluation**

Twelve weeks before the exam, students will be issued with a booklet of information on a particular topic that will have been covered by them in the course. The first section of the exam paper will be composed of questions based on the information.

- **Section B: Fieldwork**

Students will have taken part in two field trips and will have analysed data and techniques used, reaching conclusions. Questions will be based on their findings and the application of knowledge from unfamiliar fieldwork contexts.

Humanities Options Subject: History

Leads to: Edexcel GCSE History

Curriculum Leader: Mr R Miles

Why History?

“The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future”
Theodore Roosevelt

A basic part of human nature is to tell and hear stories and in history we tell the story of the past to help students to acquire a better understanding of the present. History can help students to learn how to think about important problems and give them ‘a learning for life.’

History also provides a great range of skills that are transferable to many situations – the ability to argue, analyse and present information in a coherent form. These are particularly valuable skills for employers today, making a history qualification especially prized. History is a great qualification for many careers and academic pathways. It is invaluable for students wishing to become involved in law, journalism, business and study at university.

What will I study?

A period study: Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91

Students study a short time period in great detail. This topic looks at the development of international rivalry between the USA and USSR, all within the context of nuclear weapons and the genuine threat of truly destructive war.

Wider World Depth Study: The USA, 1954–75: conflict at home and abroad. This topic allows us to look at America post WW2 with a focus on the campaign for equal rights for Africa-Americans. Internationally, the topic also covers America’s involvement and defeat in the Vietnam war.

Thematic Study: Medicine in Britain, c1250–present and The British sector of the Western Front, 1914–18: injuries, treatment and the trenches.

Students will be able to study the development of medical knowledge from the middle-ages to the present day and look at the ideas of change and continuity. By studying medicine, we are actually able to look at the history of lots of different time-periods; from the medieval period to the present day.

British Depth Study: Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060–88

This topic offers the chance to study one of the most significant moments in British history – the Norman Conquest. The topic allows students to consider important turning points like the Battle of Hastings, but also has significance for those of us living in the North through horrific actions like the Harrying of the North.

Students may choose to study both History and Geography in Year 9 – if they do this, they must choose Geography as their Humanities option and then choose History as their Depth option choice – they will study Geography for 3 hours a fortnight and History for 4 hours a fortnight due to the way the timetable is constructed. The Dual Humanities pathway will only run however if sufficient students choose both Humanities subjects to fill a Year 9 class. At the end of Year 9 you will get the opportunity again to choose between the 2 humanities subjects to continue to study at GCSE in Y10 and 11.

Depth Subject Options:

We ask all Year 8 students to select 3 Depth subjects that they would like to study in Year 9 for 3 hours a fortnight.

This allows students to study some subjects in greater depth before they pick their final two GCSE options to study in Year 10 and 11. This options process takes place in Year 9.

If a student does not enjoy one or more of their Depth options in Year 9, they DO NOT have to opt to take this in Years 10 and 11 and may drop the subject at the end of Year 9 in favour of a different subject during the Year 9 into 10 options process.

Year 8 students need to select **3 Depth Subjects plus one reserve choice.**

Mandarin Excellence Programme Students:

Year 8 students who are on the Mandarin Excellence Programme need to select **2 Depth subjects + 1 reserve** that they would like to study in Year 9. **Mandarin Chinese will take the place of their third Depth option** (meaning they will study Mandarin Chinese for 8 hours in total in Year 9 only: 5 hours of MFL time and 3 hours of Depth option time).

The Depth subjects on offer in 2026-27 are:

- Art
- Business
- Computing
- Design technology
- Drama
- Engineering
- Food and nutrition
- Health and social care
- Information technology (IT)
- Media
- Music

Information about each of the Depth subjects on offer can be found on the following pages of this booklet.

Depth Subject: Art

Leads to: AQA GCSE Art, AQA GCSE Photography

Subject Leader: Mr D Questa

Why Art?

This course offers the opportunity to learn about visual communication and artistic expression in Art and Photography. Students will develop the skills to creatively express their ideas and observations through drawing, painting, photography, ICT and 3D.

The year 9 taster course lays the foundation for the study of Art and/or Photography at GCSE Level and prepares for courses and careers in the creative field, such as fine art, illustration, fashion, photography, graphic design and animation. Students are not required to buy their own cameras, but access to one at home is encouraged.

What will I do?

Students will learn to:

- develop imaginative and creative ideas based on both visual and written investigations into the world of art from various times and cultures
- experiment with and refine their skills and techniques in both traditional and new media • record ideas and observations through drawing, painting and photography
- present and evaluate their own personal responses taking inspiration from the work of other artists.

How will I be assessed if I continue to GCSE?

The course is assessed by an examination of a portfolio of coursework (60%) and a 10-hour set task (40%) in response to themes set by the examination board.

Students will be expected to develop work in a sketchbook each week for homework. The provision of basic art materials at home is helpful.

Depth Subject: Business

Leads to: L2 BTEC Business and Enterprise, GCSE Business

Curriculum Leader: Mr J Green

Why Business and Enterprise?

Business Enterprise is a course for people who want to make things happen!

This course enables you to develop your technical skills, such as:

- Market research skills,
- Business planning,
- Promotional and financial skills
- Problem solving and Entrepreneurial skills

It's about learning to spot a great business opportunity and what makes some businesses succeed while others fail. It's about understanding where the money comes from in a business, and where it goes. It's an ideal course for people who think that they might like to start their own business one day. You'll learn the knowledge and develop the skills that you'll need to be a great entrepreneur.

Is it the right subject for me?

This course is suitable for people who have a creative and entrepreneurial mind-set. You may be interested in business, enterprise, and financial studies, or may be looking to study Business Subjects at KS4 and A Level. The introductory course leads perfectly into the BTEC (Tech Award) Business and Enterprise specification where we will build upon these three topics in further detail.

Topic 1 Exploring Business (Term 1): You will investigate the local business environment in the Horsforth Area, assessing what makes small and medium sized businesses succeed. We will prepare research and create a project on a local business including location, products and services, entrepreneurs and ownership, distribution, market research, promotion and branding. We will then assess the internal and external environment that contribute towards business success.

Topic 2 - Business Finance (Term 2): Here you will look at business finance and accounting. We will look at sources of business finance, financial forecasting tools like break even analysis and cash flow forecasting. We will use profitability calculations, liquidity ratios, income statements and balance sheets to assess and compare business performance. This is where you really learn how to manage your money and recommend strategies for financial success

Topic 3 – Business Planning (Term 3) – As part of this final topic, you will research and plan for your own small enterprise idea. Here you will create a small business plan providing aims and objectives, product design and services, marketing and branding plans, human and physical resource selection, and financial forecasting. You will then deliver a pitch to demonstrate all your research, enterprise, and hard work.

Depth Subject: Computer Science

Leads to: Edexcel GCSE Computer Science

Subject Leader: Mr J Hood

Why Computing?

This is a course that has real relevance in our modern world. While students 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. Relevant to the modern, changing world of computing, the course is designed to boost computing skills essential for 21st century. If students would like further guidance on the different course contents, please see Mr Hood, Leader of Learning for Computing.

What will I do if I continue to GCSE?

There are two different areas of focus within the course, an outline is detailed below:

- **Component 1:** Principles of Computer Science
- **Component 2:** Application of Computational Thinking

Aims and Learning Outcomes

The Edexcel GCSE specification in Computer Science aims to enable students to:

- Understand current and emerging technologies, how they work, and their applications in various contexts.
- Develop knowledge, critical thinking, technical skills, and an understanding of algorithms in computer programs.
- Become independent and discerning Computer Scientists, capable of making informed decisions while considering the ethical and societal implications of technology.
- Design, implement, and test computer programs to solve real-world problems.

How will I be assessed if I continue to GCSE?

Assessment is split into two examinations:

- **Paper 1:** Principles of Computer Science (50%) - written exam
- **Paper 2:** Application of Computational Thinking (50%) - practical computer-based exam

Both exams focus on knowledge, problem-solving, and programming skills.

Depth Subject: Design and Technology

Leads to: GCSE Design and Technology

Curriculum Leader: Mrs S Mayo

Why Design and Technology?

Design and Technology will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and will apply technical and practical expertise.

Students will study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment.

Within this course emphasis is placed on the development of practical skills and students are encouraged to be creative and innovative when working with a wide variety of materials including wood, plastic, metal, textiles, card and paper.

The course may be a stepping stone to a career in design, construction or engineering, but even if not, it will provide students with practical skills, knowledge and understanding in design and manufacture.

What will I do?

You will learn about:

- New and emerging technologies
- Properties of materials – wood, plastic, metal, textiles, card and paper.
- Mechanical devices / Forces and stresses
- Specialist equipment and processes
- Designing and work of designers

How will I be assessed if I continue to GCSE?

One examination paper (50%) testing the knowledge of the above areas. The bulk of the paper specialises in the material of your choice. Section A will require core knowledge of all materials.

Coursework: (50%)

Substantial design and make task based on chosen material area:

- Identifying and investigating design possibilities
- Producing a design brief and specification
- Generating design ideas
- Developing design ideas
- Realising design ideas
- Analysing and evaluating
- Contextual challenges to be released annually by AQA on 1 June in the year prior
- Students will produce a prototype and a portfolio of evidence

Depth Subject: Drama

Leads to: AQA GCSE Drama

Curriculum Leader: Mrs S Kendal

Why Drama?

For those students with an enthusiasm and interest in drama, the taster offers the opportunity to explore devised and scripted drama in more detail in a supportive environment with students who love to perform! Drama is a great subject to help build your confidence and develops relevant, transferable skills that are vital for most future jobs and careers.

What will I do?

Drama is fun but hard work! You will get the chance to explore and expand your creative skills and have more independence in terms of ideas and themes, having more choices with the topics you choose. However, a willingness to perform and work with a variety of different group is essential. Students get the chance to study and perform plays as well as devising from themes that are relevant to themselves and the modern world we live in.

We study a variety of interesting topics including horror, comedy, murder mystery and real-life social issues. It is also a great chance to work with like-minded people with a love of drama!

In addition, the optional Shakespeare Festival is an extracurricular opportunity where our students get the chance to perform at the Carriageworks theatre!

There are regular theatre trips as well as visiting theatre companies who come in to school to work with our students. It is a great stepping stone to GCSE but also a great subject if you want a practical subject to offer variety in your timetable, or to compliment other subjects such as English Literature.

How will I be assessed if I continue to GCSE?

Year 10: Paper 1: Devising

Students will create their own devised performance from their own ideas 40%

Year 11: Paper 2: Script practical

Students will take part in a scripted performance of a play of their choice for a visiting examiner 20%

Year 11: Paper 3

Written exam on a live theatre performance and the play Blood Brothers 40%

Depth Subject: Engineering

Leads to: Cambridge National Level 2 Engineering

Subject Leader: Mr G Dillon

Why Engineering?

Engineering is an exciting taster subject which has been designed and developed to build your skills and knowledge of the engineering world, ensuring you are prepared for your future as an engineer. By immersing yourself in the excitement and potential of working in the real world of engineering, it will blend together the best of academic and applied learning.

As well as classroom-based learning, there will be some opportunities to visit local and national engineering companies. These visits are essential to be able to learn and discover the real engineering world through applied learning.

The Engineering taster encapsulates a broad spectrum of Engineering Sectors. The year 9 taster has been developed to equip students with the baseline knowledge and skills needed for year 10 and 11. From theoretical knowledge of materials science and manufacturing processes, CAD software and computer aided manufacture, to workshop machining skills.

- > Explore a range of different materials; testing them in such a way to learn their properties and characteristics
- > Disassemble a range of products to discover how they work
- > Learn to Design, draw and sketch like an engineer would
- > Potential visits to various companies to see what Engineering looks like in the real world.

How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed in variety of ways over the course of the taster year. Internally assessed projects will be completed through small reports and practical activities. You will be assessed each lesson through questioning and discussion and also quick-fire quizzes to check what you have been taught.

Where can the qualification take me?

After you have finished this taster year, the obvious progression would be to study Cambridge National Level 2 Engineering as a KS4 option. In KS4 the components you will be taught build upon the taster year and would put you in an ideal position for either a place in sixth form studying Level 3 BTEC Engineering or an apprenticeship with a local or national engineering firm.

Depth Subject: Food Preparation and Nutrition

Leads to: AQA GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

Curriculum Leader: Mrs S Mayo

Why Food Preparation and Nutrition?

The Food Preparation and Nutrition course will provide students with the opportunity to learn important concepts relating to food, from the current principles of healthy eating to food hygiene. Students will also consider environmental and sustainability, cultural, moral and economic issues. As a practical subject the course requires students to master a wide range of food preparation skills.

Within this course emphasis is placed on the development of practical skills and students are encouraged to be creative and innovative when working with food.

The course may be a stepping stone to a career related to food, but even if not, it will provide students with the practical skills, knowledge and understanding to make informed decisions relating to food choices which are important life skills. There are also many career opportunities relating to this subject.

What will I do?

In addition to practical skills students will study five areas:

- Food, nutrition and health
- Food science
- Food safety
- Food choice
- Food provenance.

How will I be assessed if I continue to GCSE?

Coursework: (50%)

- Task 1: Food Investigation. Written report (1,500-2,000 words)
Understanding the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of food.
- Task 2: Food Preparation assessment.
- Electronic portfolio + 3 hour Practical Exam
 - Planning, preparation, cooking, presentation of food and application of nutrition to a chosen task.

Written Examination: 1 hour 45 minutes

Theoretical knowledge of food preparation and nutrition from all 5 sections.

Depth Subject: Health and Social Care

Leads to: Level 2 BTEC Health and Social Care

Subject Leader: Miss K Broughton

Why Health and Social Care?

Health and Social Care is part of everybody's life, from birth. A BTEC in Health and Social Care can give you the practical skills and knowledge to progress to your chosen career. With qualifications designed for working in the healthcare sector, your BTEC can prepare you for real-life working experiences. The Pearson BTEC Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care is for learners who want to acquire sector-specific applied knowledge through vocational contexts by studying human lifespan development, health and social care services and values, and health and wellbeing as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. The qualification recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSEs. The qualification will broaden learners' experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them.

How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed in variety of ways over the course of the taster year. Internally assessed projects will be completed through small reports and practical activities. You will be assessed each lesson through questioning and discussion and also quick-fire quizzes to check what you have been taught.

Where can the qualification take me?

After you have finished this taster year, the obvious progression would be to study BTEC Level 2 Health and Social Care as a KS4 option. In KS4 the components you will be taught build upon the taster year and would put you in an ideal position for either a place in sixth form studying Level 3 BTEC Health and Social Care or an apprenticeship within the health or social care sector.

Depth Subject: Information Technology (IT)

Leads to: OCR Cambridge Nationals in IT

Subject Leader: Mr R. Emmett

Why IT?

The Cambridge Nationals in IT is an exciting and dynamic course designed for students who are passionate about technology and its practical applications. This new qualification focuses on real world skills and prepares students for employment in the ever-evolving IT sector. The course takes students on a journey through diverse and engaging topics, including graphic design using Photoshop, video editing, cutting-edge AR (Augmented Reality) and VR (Virtual Reality) technology, and data management.

By exploring these areas, students will not only develop their creativity and technical abilities but also gain an understanding of how IT plays a crucial role in modern businesses and industries. For more information on the course, please see Mr. Emmet, Curriculum Leader for IT and Computer Science.

What will I do if I choose Cambridge Nationals in IT?

The course is structured to provide a mix of practical and theoretical knowledge, with units aimed at developing skills highly relevant to employment. Key areas of focus include:

- Graphic Design and Media: Learning to create stunning visuals using Photoshop and mastering video editing tools.
- Emerging Technologies: Exploring AR and VR technologies and their applications across industries.
- Data Management and Employment: Understanding the importance of data, analysing its use, and creating solutions for data driven decision making.

Aims and Learning Outcomes

This course will enable students to:

- Gain hands-on experience in a range of IT applications and software.
- Understand how emerging technologies, such as AR and VR, are shaping industries and society.
- Develop problem-solving and creative thinking skills by working on practical projects.
- Prepare for future employment by building a portfolio of work that demonstrates their skills and capabilities.

What will it lead to?

- The Cambridge Nationals in IT provides an excellent foundation for a wide range of future opportunities. It is ideal for students looking to progress into:
- Further Education: Such as Level 2 qualifications in IT, Computing, or Creative Media.
- Apprenticeships: In areas such as IT support, digital marketing, software development, or data analysis.
- Careers: Including roles in graphic design, video production, AR/VR development, data management, and other IT-related fields.
- This qualification equips students with the practical skills and theoretical knowledge required for the modern workplace, making it a perfect starting point for anyone interested in pursuing a career in technology or related industries.

Depth Subject: Media

Leads to: GCSE Media Studies

Curriculum Leader: Mrs B Watkins

Why Media Studies?

Media Studies is a dynamic, exciting and fun subject, which allows you to study and produce products that you engage with every day. These include TV shows, films, social media, games, music videos, adverts and more. You will build on your skills in analysis, literacy and creativity, as we study up-to-date media texts. You will also make your own products, using software that is used by media professionals. You will also have the opportunity to discover the careers that are available in the media, film and creative industries.

What will I do in Year 9?

- Magazine production
- Camerawork in film and TV
- Short film production (including competition entry)
- Website design

How will I be assessed if I continue to GCSE in Year 10?

You will be assessed with two exams with a range of short and extended questions based on the study of a selection of close study media products. Each exam is one and half hours in duration and makes up a total of 70% of your final grade. The non-exam assessment is made up of a practical brief that is released by the exam board. You will select which type of product that you wish to create. This could be a TV show, a film, a print advert, a music video, a social media page, a game or any other type of media.

Where the course can lead:

With a GCSE in Media Studies you can continue on to further level 2 and 3 vocational and academic study, including our very own Media Studies A Level course, as well as apprenticeships and traineeships.

Depth Subject: Music

Leads to: GCSE Music

Curriculum Leader: Mr S Denson

Why Music?

GCSE Music offers students the chance to gain a qualification highly respected by employers, colleges and universities. The qualification shows that students can manage their own time through rehearsing regularly, they can work well with others as part of a group, and they can evidence an ability to improve at a skill through instrument development. Although many courses offer students the chance to show some of these skills, as one of the only creative subjects still part of the National Curriculum, music holds a high level of respect in and outside of educational contexts. Some of our students go on to study music further, working as composers, performers and analysts, but many use this subject to continue doing a skill they love whilst gaining a valuable qualification. Both experienced musicians and complete beginners can access this course, and we currently offer heavily subsidised instrumental lessons throughout Year 10 and 11 to support students from all backgrounds. You do not have to be an instrumentalist to take GCSE music, many of our students are first study singers, but a willingness to learn the basics of a variety of instruments is needed to allow a visual understanding of music.

What will I do if I continue to GCSE?

Three contrasting sections:

- a) Performing Music: playing an instrument and/or singing both individually and as part of a group.
- b) Composing Music: composing two compositions of any genre, using state-of-the-art software.
- c) Understanding Music: improving general music theory and listening skills while also studying set study works.

How will I be assessed if I continue to GCSE?

- a) Two recorded performances, one as a solo and one as a member of a group. Both performances marked and recorded internally meaning that students do not have to perform to an audience.
- b) Two compositions, one free choice, one set to a brief. Can be composed through Digital Audio Workspaces such as Garage Band and Sibelius or through live recordings and hand-written notation.
- c) 1 ½ hour exam paper consisting of eight pieces of music played to candidates with a variety of written and multiple-choice answers. Six unheard pieces, two set works.

Both performances and composition recordings can be requested for external moderation.