

Introduction

Dear Parents/Carers and Students,

This booklet is designed to help you choose your GCSE subjects for Years 9, 10 and 11.

It is extremely important that you discuss your plans with your teachers, parents and carers. They will be able to advise you about subjects based on their knowledge of your individual strengths and the suitability of the course for you.

At St Nicholas Catholic High School, we aim to provide a broad and balanced education for all. This enables students to develop a wide range of capabilities and skills designed to keep Further or Higher Education and career options open. We are committed to ensuring that students follow a pathway that is appropriate to their needs and abilities. The design of our curriculum at Key Stage 4 provides flexibility to meet the needs and preferences of individual pupils. Within the letter you will have recently received, we have identified the most appropriate pathway for you to follow within Key Stage 4.

The Government introduced a programme of Key Stage 4 reform in 2017. The key features of the new GCSEs are:

- Qualifications are graded on a scale from 1 to 9 (with 9 being the highest).
- Courses are fully linear, i.e. no modules, no coursework, no controlled assessment, “except where they cannot provide valid assessment of skills provided”.
- Increased extended writing with fewer bite sized questions in examinations.
- Focus on knowledge curriculum.

The subject information in this booklet reflects the most up to date information we have available. Should there be any further significant changes we will of course notify you.

Should it not be possible to allocate a student their first choice, parents and students will be kept fully informed of this and no change will be made to a student’s choices without discussion of the options available.

Please do not hesitate to contact your child’s Head of Year, in the first instance, if you have any concerns or questions.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Spencer
Assistant Headteacher

Making Decisions

Making decisions is never easy. The decisions you will have to make about which Courses to take at Key Stage 4 are very important. It is essential that you think carefully regarding which subjects to study. Your choice will depend on your ability in various subjects, your interests and intended career.

- Read through this booklet carefully
- If in doubt, ask relevant members of staff for advice
- Discuss your ideas with your parents
- Speak to other students who are currently undertaking the subject

Do choose subjects:

- You are good at and have been successful in (at)
- You enjoy
- You need for your future career and education

Don't choose subjects:

- Just because your friends want to do them
- Just because you like the teacher

Core Curriculum

Some subjects are compulsory. You must study RE, English, Maths and Science. You will also study PE.

GCSE RE 1 subject

GCSE English 2 subjects (English Language and Literature)

GCSE Maths 1 subject

GCSE Science* Combined Science (2 GCSEs) or Separate Science (3 GCSE's)

Core PE (Non-exam)

*A decision whether Combined or Separate Science is followed is taken from the performance within KS3 and is communicated later in the year.

Religious Education

In Year 10 and Year 11, all students will follow Religious Studies Edexcel Specification A. This course is 100% external assessment so there is no coursework involved.

The course will consist of a Roman Catholic paper and a study of Judaism as well as a study of Philosophy and Ethics.

This course meets the requirements of the Catholic Bishop's Curriculum Directory and is followed by a number of schools in the Diocese. The school is required to provide Religious Education as a fundamental element of its existence. The advantage of this system is that the students can achieve a full and highly respected GCSE at the end of it.

General comment:

You may question "Why should you have to do Religious Studies?"

Religious Studies looks at life, your life in particular. You are constantly bombarded by society's messages, society's values, and the things that society feels are important. This subject gives you the opportunity to deal with the fundamental questions of life, to see where your life is going and how religion is still important in your life and in the world in general. It gives the world universal values designed for the good of all, not just a few.

Additionally, it helps you to develop your critical thinking skills through analysing difficult concepts, including reasons for your own "faith position" and appreciation of the value of our Christian tradition.

English Language

You will follow the AQA course in English Language. This course will develop your ability to speak, listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes, preparing you superbly for your life beyond St. Nicholas', whether as a student, or as a member of the wider community.

In Years 10 and 11 you will study the following areas in preparation for your exams at the end of Y11:

- Narrative, creative writing
- Writing for the real world
- Reading modern fiction
- Reading non-fiction texts from the present and the past.

There are two exams of 1 hour and 45 minutes each.

You will also produce a Speaking and Listening Assessment which will be graded separately. This will take the form of an individual presentation. Through your study of this course, you will gradually become an English specialist, and should be aiming to exceed your target grade.

English Literature

You will follow the AQA English Literature GCSE course, which requires you to study plays, both modern and historical; poetry; and novels. You will develop your ability to infer meaning from these texts, as well as your understanding of the contexts in which the texts are set and the ways in which a writer works his craft.

In Years 10 and 11, you will prepare for two final exams assessing the following areas:

- Shakespeare
- Post 1914 Prose/Post 1914 Drama
- 19th Century Prose
- Poetry from 1789 to the present day.

There are two exams; one of 1 hour and 45 minutes and another of 2 hours and 15 minutes.

This course will help you to develop your ideas about culture, humanity and the world around you. You will also become more aware of the significance of context, which shapes both the writers' work and your response to it.

How to... Get There in Style!

In order to become a true English and Literature Specialist, you should do as many of the following, as often as you possibly can:

- Read at least three broadsheet articles - articles from The Times, The Telegraph, The Guardian, The Observer, The Independent - every week.
- Practise the basic skills of English - spelling, punctuation and construction of elegant sentences which convey your ideas clearly.
- Collect leaflets and look at the ways in which information is presented and how language is used in them.
- Go to the theatre.
- Watch and /or listen to quality news programmes - BBC/ITV/Radio 4.
- Read regularly. If you are in any doubt about what constitutes a "good book", talk to your English teacher.

Mathematics

The department's aim is to promote the feeling by all students that:

“They can do Mathematics”

All students are encouraged:

- to feel confident in their work
- to achieve their full potential
- to gain satisfaction and enjoyment from their work

Students study topics from following areas:

Using and applying Mathematics: solve problems, explain reasoning.

Number: calculate with whole numbers, decimals, fractions, percentages, ratios, written and mental calculations, indices, standard form.

Algebra: equations, formulae, expressions, graphs, sequences.

Shape, space and measures: angles, perimeter, area, volume, properties of 2D and 3D shapes, transformations, trigonometry, Pythagoras' Theorem.

Handling Data: statistics, statistical diagrams, sampling, and probability.

Setting

Mathematics classes are taught in ability sets, with each year group having two bands and 4 or 5 sets in each band. Setting means that the work is clearly directed at the appropriate level of ability for each student. This maximises for each student the understanding and the feeling that they “can do Mathematics”. Thus the enjoyment, competence and confidence of students is increased. Movement between sets is encouraged at all times but is always considered after internal examinations. The Subject Leader coordinates the changes with discussion between teachers and consideration is taken of classwork, homework and general attitude as well as examination result.

Equipment needed

All students are required to have pens, pencils, a ruler (a short 15cm one is adequate), eraser and a scientific calculator for every Mathematics lesson. A protractor and pair of compasses is also useful when covering particular topics.

Written work

In Mathematics the following points are important:

All working should be neatly shown in exercise books. Even when using a calculator the calculation carried out should be shown.

All diagrams should be drawn with a ruler and pencil.

Homework

Mathematics homework is set on Hegarty Maths. Students have a separate Hegarty Maths book and they are expected to make notes on both the video clip and the quiz. The homework tasks set are designed to continually revise and reinforce work previously covered in class as frequent recall is essential for success in Mathematics. Students will complete corrections after each homework task.

Internal Examinations

An examination is set once per year for all students. This will cover all topics that have been taught so far that year plus a number of topics from previous years. Usually examinations consist of two papers, one of which will be non-calculator. Shorter assessments are set in the other two terms. These are usually an hour long and will test topics taught since the previous assessment. Students are always be given notice of these exams and tests together with details of what is being tested. They are an important and useful indicator of a student's progress and should be taken seriously.

GCSE Examinations

Students take the Edexcel GCSE examination 1MA1. This will be at Higher (grades 5–9) or Foundation (grades 1–5). The examinations will consist of 3 papers that are 80 marks each and one of which will be non-calculator.

Physical Education

All students in Years 10 and 11 receive 240 minutes of physical activity per fortnight. (4 x 1 Hour)

Students will participate in a range of activities that embed skills taught in key stage 3, develop personal fitness and promote an active healthy lifestyle.

Students will be taught to:

- Use and develop a variety of tactics and strategies to overcome opponents in team and individual games (for example badminton, basketball, cricket, football, hockey, netball, rounders, rugby and tennis)
- Develop their technique and improve their performance in other competitive sports, for example athletics and trampolining
- Work as a team
- Evaluate their performances compared to previous ones and demonstrate improvement across a range of physical activities to achieve their personal best.
- continue to take part regularly in competitive sports and activities outside school through community links or sports clubs
- Develop their leadership skills with lessons and extra-curricular activities.

The emphasis is very much based enjoyment, progress, skill development and knowledge learnt in KS3 and social attitudes. Staff adopt a variety of teaching strategies and styles to ensure that all students fulfil their potential.

Year 10 is seen as a transitional phase, where students cover the same activities as in previous years. Greater emphasis is now placed on the full-sided game and the understanding of rules and tactics and strategies for successful play.

In Year 11 students enter an option scheme encouraging maximum participation in their chosen sports. Hopefully this experience leads to continued involvement in sport after they have left St Nicholas Catholic High School.

Extra-Curricular Activities:

These are seen by all departmental colleagues as being an essential part of our work. In order to provide opportunities for all students of all abilities in KS4, we offer as wide a variety as possible, including:

- Purely recreational sessions.
- School squad training sessions.
- Fixtures against schools within Mid-Cheshire and a number of surrounding counties.
- The opportunity for children to gain representative honours at District, County and National Level.
- Whole school Sports Day.

Through the curriculum and extra-curricular programs we have built strong links between the local community and local schools.

The following clubs are currently available:

Basketball	Hockey	Athletics	Cricket	Netball	Rugby
Union	Football	Rounders	Tennis	Badminton	Fitness

Science

Students will be notified in Year 9 as to which course they will be following.

Assessment for Year 9 students is on-going and decisions on KS4 courses (Trilogy or Separate) will be notified in the Autumn term of Year 10 2020. Assessment will be from two sources:

- Assessment of pupil progress (end of unit tests)
- Teacher assessment of behaviour for learning (as communicated on Tracking and Monitoring)

GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy) AQA

Science is a set of ideas about the material world. This specification includes all the ingredients of what good science is at GCSE level: whether it be investigating, observing, experimenting or testing out ideas and thinking about them in Biology, Chemistry and Physics units.

This course is suitable for preparing students for A Level science qualifications at Key Stage 5 (minimum entry requirements are grade 5 in Higher Science papers)

Examinations

Students will sit six exam papers at the end of Year 11. There will be two Biology papers, two Chemistry papers and two Physics papers.

Each paper is 1 hour 15 minutes long and consists of 70 marks. Questions are a mix of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response questions.

Students will receive two GCSE Science grades.

Separate Sciences (AQA)

Biology will give students the opportunity to gain a good understanding of human biology, organisms, evolution and the environment.

Chemistry will give students a good understanding of the nature of substances and how they react together, how chemistry is used in business and industry and how our use of fuels affect the local and global environment.

Physics will give students a good understanding of the use and transfer of energy, as well as an insight into the nature of waves, radiation and space. They'll also learn about the application of physics in the real world they live.

Examinations

Students will sit six exam papers at the end of Year 11. There will be two Biology papers, two Chemistry papers and two Physics papers.

Each paper is 1 hour 45 minutes long and consists of 100 marks. Questions are a mix of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response questions.

Students will receive one GCSE grade for Biology, one GCSE grade for Chemistry and one GCSE grade for Physics.

Art & Design

Why choose Art and Design?

Being creative is the next big thing. Every good company realises that creativity and good design are important factors in generating new business. So your creativity isn't just a way of satisfying your artistic soul... it can open the door to exciting opportunities as well.

This GCSE is a practical course that allows you to be as creative as you want to be.

Look at the list below these are just some of the jobs in which you can use your artistic talents:

- Illustrator
- Sculptor
- Graphic designer
- Exhibition designer
- Art teacher
- Interior designer
- Packaging designer
- Industrial designer
- Potter
- Art historian
- Film animator
- Poster artist
- Furniture designer
- Make-up artist
- Environmental designer
- Visual merchandiser
- Theatre/Prop/Costume/Set designer
- Art therapist
- Display assistant
- Textile Designer
- Model maker
- Cartoonist
- Desktop publishing operator
- Jeweller/silversmith
- Painter
- Fashion designer
- Stage designer
- Sign maker
- Accessory designer
- Photographer
- Fashion photography
- Toy Designer
- Lighting designer
- Advertising
- Fashion merchandiser
- Fashion buyer
- Architect

Course Structure

We follow the AQA Art & Design Specification.

There are 2 units of work; Unit 1, which is worth 60% of the overall GCSE, is the Portfolio unit (Coursework), and Unit 2, which is worth 40% is the externally set assignment (Exam)

What happens in Year 10?

You will work on one broad theme that will be added to as the year progresses.

Staff will set work but, as time goes on, you will develop your work more personally.

What do I need for my coursework?

You will need research sheets, final pieces and a sketchbook for each of the two topics.

For each topic you must have at least one final piece, this can be in any media you choose i.e. a painting or textiles. Final pieces are usually A2 size or above. The research sheets will support your ideas. A sketchbook should be made up of the following:-

- A front cover decorated to fit in with the theme
- Work on the left and right hand pages

- Observational drawings
- At least three examples of artists/designers work
- Cultural work, such as African, Indian, Chinese etc.
- Written Research
- Computer work
- Trying out own ideas
- Planning for the final pieces
- Annotations, notes and personal opinions
- Experimenting with materials.

(All the above must be relevant to the topic.)

Do I need to be able to draw to take Art?

Yes - the new specification has a much greater emphasis on drawing. We will help you improve your skills throughout the course.

What is the exam like?

The questions are set by AQA and you choose one of the 6 starting points. You will have approximately six weeks to prepare by producing research sheets and then you have ten hours to complete a final piece or pieces.

What happens in Year 11?

During Year 11 you complete another unit of coursework and begin the examination period in January.

Is it different to what we do in Year 9?

No. The way that you have worked on Themes in Year 9 and the Key Stage Assessment work is exactly the way that you need to work for GCSE; research sheets followed by more finished pieces of work.

How do I gain marks?

By showing evidence of:

- Observational drawing skills
- Reference to Artists/Designers work
- Other cultures
- Research and finding out of information
- Developing and adapting ideas
- Using a range of materials including ICT
- Communicating in visual and written form
- Skills in the use of materials.

All of these are marked

Who marks the work?

The Coursework and the Exam are marked by your Art teachers in school and then the Exam Board selects a sample to be checked by a moderator to make sure that the marks are correct.

How much homework do I get?

Homework is set once a week and you should spend at least two hours on it.

Can't wait to get started?

For more information please speak to your Art teacher.

Business Studies

Have you ever wanted to be your own boss and run your own business? Within weeks of starting this course you will be trading and making profit.

If you have big company ambitions you will learn how to operate in global markets. This is a hugely interesting course and is designed to give valuable insights into all types of businesses and covers services, manufacturing and web based organisations.

The course starts by looking at how to start up a business in Unit 1 and progressing to Unit 2 which focuses on helping you to develop the business further and manage it to ensure success.

Unit 1: Investigating a small business

1 hour 30 minutes Examination
50% of the qualification

- Entrepreneurship and enterprise
- Spotting a business opportunity
- Putting a business idea into practice
- Making the business effective

Understanding external influences on business

Unit 2: Building a business

1 hour 30 minutes Examination
50% of the qualification

- Growing the business
- Making marketing decisions
- Making operational decisions
- Making financial decisions

Making human resource decisions

Assessment

The exam board is Edexcel. Both papers will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions based on a business context outlined in the exam paper. You will sit both exams at the end of Year 11.

Computer Science

The Computer Science GCSE course will give you a real in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. You may be familiar with the use of computers and other related technology from your other subjects and elsewhere. However, this course will give you an insight into what goes on 'behind the scenes', including computer programming, which many students find absorbing.

The course provides excellent preparation for higher study and employment in the field of computer science. The increasing importance of information technologies means there will be a growing demand for professionals who are qualified in this area. Students who've taken a GCSE in Computer Science and who then progress to study the subject at A Level or university will have an advantage over their peers who are picking up the subject at these levels.

The course will develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills through the study of computer programming, giving you a fun and interesting way to develop these skills, which can be transferred to other subjects and even applied in day-to-day life. In this respect, the course provides excellent preparation for those students who want to study or work in areas that rely on these skills, especially where they are applied to technical problems. These areas include engineering, finance and resource management, science and medicine. We will be following the OCR Specification.

Course Summary

Unit Title and Description	Assessment and Duration	Weighting
Computer Systems		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Systems Architecture• Memory• Storage• Wired and wireless networks• Network topologies, protocols and layers• System security• System software• Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns	1 hour 30 minutes Written paper 80 marks	50%
Computational thinking, algorithms and programming		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Algorithms• Programming techniques• Producing robust programs• Computational logic• Translators and facilities of languages• Data representation	1 hour 30 minutes Written paper 80 marks	50%
Programming Project		
Programming techniques Analysis Design Development Testing and evaluation and conclusions	A 20 hour task set by the exam board. This does not count towards the final grade, but the skills developed will help students in paper 2.	

"I think it's fair to say that personal computers have become the most empowering tool we've ever created. They're tools of communication, they're tools of creativity, and they can be shaped by their user."

Bill Gates - Principle founder of Microsoft

If you want to learn how to shape what a computer can do take this course!

Drama

Written Exam 40%

Internal Assessment 40%

Practical Exam 20%

The course is divided into three components:

Analysing Theatre – Students will watch theatre and comment on the effectiveness of them. They will study a set play and answer questions on it as either the role of a performer, director or designer.

Devising Theatre - Students will be given a stimulus in groups to create their own piece of drama

Performing Theatre – Students will study a set text and perform two extracts from it

The course allows students to study drama in an academic setting, interrogating this art form and applying their knowledge and understanding to the process of creating and developing drama and to their own performance work. Students will have the opportunity to create their own pieces of drama and re-create published plays. Students will also be required to show their understanding of live theatre and the plays studied throughout the course in a written examination at the end of the two years.

The course is aimed at students who enjoy performing and would like to develop these skills at GCSE level. It aims to create independent thinkers with skills in research, working with others, analysis, communication, time management, ICT, problem solving, planning and organising. It is a subject in which the skills taught are easily transferrable to all other subjects. Face to face communication in society today is vastly decreasing and this course will enhance these skills and create a young adult with confidence and the ability to communicate meaning in many fields of life.

Component 1 – ‘Understanding Drama’

What is assessed?

Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre * Study of one set play from a choice of six * Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers

How it's assessed

Written exam: 1 hour and 45 minutes - 40% of GCSE

Component 2 – ‘Devising Drama’

What is assessed?

- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama (students may contribute as performer or designer)
- Analysis and evaluation of own work

How it's assessed

Devising written log and a devised practical performance - 40% of GCSE

This component is marked by teachers and moderated by AQA.

Component 3 – ‘Texts in Practice’

What is assessed?

Performance of two extracts from one play (students may contribute as performer or designer)

How it's assessed

A practical performance - 20% of GCSE

This component is marked by AQA.

Design Technology

This Design and Technology course is a completely new GCSE. The emphasis is on your creativity and imagination both in the design, and manufacture of products. During this course you will have the opportunity to work creatively through making a range of products large and small. You have the choice of working with wood, metal, plastics, electronic and mechanical systems.

In this new course you will learn about the historical, social, cultural, environmental, economic factors and other aspects relating to product design. You will learn about design and making principles, materials and processes. You will learn about the history of product design, current, new and emerging technologies. You will learn about the work of past and present well-known designers and companies including: The Arts and Crafts Movement, Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Bauhaus, Modernism, De Stijl Memphis and Postmodernism.

You will undertake a short focussed practical task at the beginning of Year 10 to develop your knowledge and practical skills and to prepare you for GCSE unit 1. These skills will include presentation drawing, computer aided design skills, practical skills and knowledge of the shaping, forming and joining of different materials.

How are you assessed?

Unit 1: 50% of GCSE

Towards the end of Year 10 and continuing through Year 11 you will produce one substantial 'Design and Making' practical piece. What you decide to make should be in response to solving a real and relevant problem for the needs of a client or market. You can choose what to make from a broad theme set by the examination board. You will also produce a design portfolio recording your skills of investigation, designing, making and evaluation of what you have produced. (Max 20 pages A3 or PowerPoint) This is marked holistically and not in a linear manner.

Unit 2: 50% of GCSE Taken at the end of Year 11.

This will comprise a 2 hour written examination with a mixture of short and long answers in three sections as follows:

Section A – Core technical principles (20 marks)

A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing breadth of technical knowledge and understanding.

Section B – Specialist technical principles (30 marks)

Several short answer questions (2–5 marks) and one extended response to assess more in depth knowledge of technical principles.

Section C – Designing and making principles (50 marks)

A mixture of short answer and extended questions including a 12 mark design question.

Is GCSE Product Design for you?

- You should enjoy carrying out product investigation, research and working independently.
- Enjoy sketching and using the computer for computer aided drawing
- Enjoy practical work including experimenting, modelling and making quality products.

Food Technology

Why choose Food Preparation and Nutrition?

Food Preparation and Nutrition is an exciting and creative course that focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure you develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food. The focus is on developing practical cookery skills to give you an understanding of nutrition.

Core Topics

There are five core topics:

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

You will complete lots of practical work and in the Food Safety topic you will also have the opportunity to achieve the Basic Food Hygiene Certificate.

Assessments

Written Examination – 1 hour 45 minutes and is worth 50% of the final GCSE

The paper will assess all 5 topics and is divided into 2 sections:

- Section A – consists of multiple choice questions worth 20 marks
- Section B – consists of 5 longer questions with sub-sections worth 80 marks

Non-Exam Assessment– consists of 2 tasks

- Task 1 –Food Investigation (10 hours - worth 15%)

The task is set by AQA and involves a written report (1,500–2,000 words). You will be expected to show your understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. It must include photographic evidence of the practical investigation.

- Task 2 –Food Preparation (20 hours, including a 3 hour practical - worth 35%)

Involves a written portfolio where you will show your knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking, presentation of food and application of nutrition related to the chosen task.

You will plan, prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes in three hours. Photographic evidence of the three final dishes must be included.

Are You/Do You?

Well motivated, enthusiastic and enjoy cooking

Then.....

Food Preparation and Nutrition is the course for you!

Geography

Aims of the Course

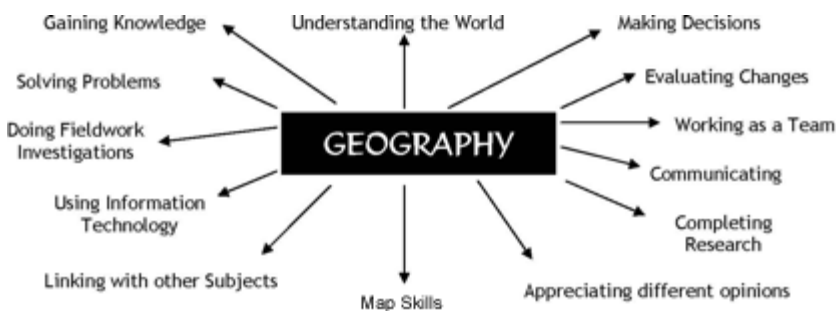
Geography is concerned with developing an awareness and an understanding of the world in which you live. It helps you to know where places are, to understand what they are like and how they may be changing. Geography encourages you to think carefully about the challenges facing the world today and how they can be solved.

Syllabus and Examination Board

AQA GCSE Geography

- Building on the Key Stage 3 Schemes of work
- Making sense of the modern world
- Linking people and the environment
- Understanding changes and their consequences
- Making decisions about the world we live in
- Providing the foundations for study beyond GCSE.

You're Lost without Geography!



What will you study?

The world is always changing. This course gives you the chance to learn about those changes. Split into four separate units, a sound understanding of important Physical Processes will be developed as well as a focus on Human Geography.

Geographers use many different skills and Geography has many links with other subjects you will be studying in school.

Teaching and Learning in Geography

We use a variety of techniques and styles including discussion, research, ICT (computers, DVDs, VCs), problem solving and fieldwork. It is essential that good geographers can work independently and in groups.

Will I enjoy the course?

You will enjoy the course if you want to study a subject that:

- Is relevant to the world you live in and to your future
- Encourages you to discuss current affairs and issues
- Focuses on the environment
- Involves practical work outdoors
- Is studied through investigation, not just listening and reading
- Develops a full range of skills that will be useful in other subjects you study and in employment.

The Course is made up from 3 papers:

Paper 1 - Physical Geography

- Tectonics
- Weather hazards
- Climate change
- Rivers and Glaciers
- Ecosystems
- Cold environments

Exam: 1 hour 30 minutes

35% of GCSE

Paper 2 - Human Geography

- Urban world
- Urban change in the UK
- Urban sustainability
- The development gap
- The changing UK economy
- Water management

Exam: 1 hour 30 minutes

35% of GCSE

Paper 3 - Geographical Applications

- Issue evaluation
- Fieldwork
- Geographical skills

Exam: 1 hour

30% of GCSE

Careers using Geography can include:

Law, Meteorology, Teaching, Pilot Training, The Police Force, Environmental and Conservation work, Surveying and Engineering, Consultancy, Town and Country planning to name but a few.

Many employers see Geography as a dynamic and academic subject and as Michael Palin said:
"Geography is the subject that holds the key to our future".

History

Aims of the Course

History is all about learning about what happened in the past and using skills that you develop to explain, analyse, assess and reach judgements about the why these things happened. You will learn about historical concepts such as continuity, change, cause, consequence, significance, similarity and difference.

History therefore teaches you about incredible individuals and the reasons behind events and changes that if they were in a Hollywood movie would seem far-fetched. You will learn how so much of the past still affects our lives today, and also give you the skills you need to make your own decisions and negotiate the modern world in which we live.

Syllabus and Examination Board

We study AQA GCSE History

What will you study?

There are two exam papers.

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World

Exam: 2 hours. 50% of the GCSE

Germany 1890-1945

How and why did Hitler become the leader of Germany?

What was it like to live in Hitler's Germany?

The Cold War 1945-1972

How and why did the USA and the USSR almost start the Third World War?

How close was the world to nuclear Armageddon?

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation

Exam: 2 hours. 50% of the GCSE

Health and the People c.1000 to the present day

Why do people live longer?

Elizabethan England c.1568-1603

What was it like to live in Elizabethan England?

Teaching and Learning in History

We use a variety of techniques and styles including discussion, research, and problem solving. It is essential that good historians can work independently and in groups.

Will I enjoy the course?

You will enjoy the course if you want to study a subject that helps you to:

- Understand how and why humans behaved as they did – and may behave in similar circumstances again. Unless you become a lighthouse keeper or a hermit you'll need to understand other people with all their complexities. Knowledge of people is the greatest asset of all. This can be vital in relations with the most complex factor in any job – your colleagues!
- Research topics for yourself.
- See how many of the problems and strengths of the world today have their roots in the past.
- Learn to express a clear personal point of view.
- Be analytical and critical when considering information.
- Weigh conflicting factors carefully before taking critical decisions.
- Be highly valued by universities and employers.

Careers using History can include:

You might think that History can only help in the heritage industry, or if you wanted to work in a museum or as an archaeologist.

Actually studying History opens doors with all sorts of employers.

People who have studied GCSE History are valued in education, law, the media, Government, public services, business and the armed forces.

In fact it is almost impossible to think of a career where History would not help you.

Modern Foreign Languages

The French and Spanish GCSEs are both stimulating and motivating for our students. The topics covered will inspire our students and develop their interest in the culture of French and Spanish speaking countries.

Whilst most students at St Nicholas Catholic High School will choose to study either French or Spanish, some of our keenest linguists will consider opting for both languages at GCSE. The exam structure and question style is exactly the same for French and Spanish. This, added to the fact that there are many similarities in terms of vocabulary and grammar, mean that taking both French and Spanish at GCSE has considerable benefits to our language learners.

In Years 10 and 11 students have 5 lessons per fortnight of French and/or Spanish and we have written our schemes of work around the course books and the new AQA GCSE specification, making use of the available assessment resources, additional exercises, the workbooks and ICT opportunities therein.

The pupils are regularly assessed using new GCSE criteria to allow them to see their progression and targets are set in line with their FFT predictions and their progress made in lessons and in homework. The pupils entered for the new GCSE qualifications must sit all components at either the Foundation or Higher level in the same examination series.

Component 1 (25% of qualification): Speaking

Oral test:

7-9 minutes (Foundation tier)

10-12 minutes (Higher tier)

Three tasks:

One role play

One photo card discussion

One conversation (2 themes)

Component 2 (25% of qualification): Listening

Written examination:

35 minutes (Foundation tier)

45 minutes (Higher tier)

Listening comprehension tasks with non-verbal and written responses

Component 3 (25% of qualification): Reading

Written examination:

45 minutes (Foundation tier)

1 hour (Higher tier)

Reading tasks with non-verbal and written responses, including one translation task from French or Spanish into English

Component 4 (25% of qualification): Writing

Written examination:

1 hour (Foundation tier)

1 hour 15 minutes (Higher tier)

Writing tasks including one translation task from English into French or Spanish

Music

In your music lessons, as well as develop your creativity, you will build your problem solving, research, planning, analytical and critical thinking skills. Not to mention discipline, composure under pressure, time management, communication and independent learning- all gained from practice and performing. You will also develop your understanding of how composers developed their compositions in a wide variety of styles.

The Eduqas GCSE music course treats music as a practical subject through an active involvement in three musical activities: Performing, Composing and Listening.

Performing

30%

One solo and one group performance. Can be performed on any instrument (**including singing**) and in any style. The choice of music is yours. You are recorded and assessed by your teacher and then your performance is externally moderated.

Composing

30%

Two compositions are recorded and assessed by your teacher and then externally moderated. The style of one of your compositions is set by the examining board the other is your choice.

Listening and Appraising

40%

You will be asked to listen to a variety of musical extracts and evaluate them using knowledge and understanding of musical elements, musical contexts and musical language in a written exam.

Please note that it is NOT a requirement of the course for you to have passed any external music exams. However you do need to demonstrate the ability to play an instrument and the determination to practice and improve your level of performance.

All instruments are acceptable, e.g., Drum Kit, Electric Guitar, Keyboard, Voice, Piano, Saxophone etc.

Career opportunities

Music Journalist. Sound Engineer. Video Game Music Composer. Film Music Composer. Music Therapist. Music Producer. Events Management. Record Label Music Co-Ordinator. Audio Technician. Instrumental Tutor.

Retail Business

Why is customer service so important? Is seasonality an opportunity or a threat for retailing businesses? What do customers expect from retailers? Do loyalty cards work? How do retail businesses compete? Why are fitting rooms at the back of the shop?

If you opt to study this vocational course then you will gain all the answers to these questions. You will also have the opportunity to visit different retail businesses as well as have visits from speakers in industry. You will also gain the opportunity to be a mystery shopper!

Assessment

This course is made up of two thirds and one third external written exam. It is therefore ideal for those of you who are self-motivated, organised, like to carry out research independently, can manage your time effectively inside and outside of lessons, can meet deadlines, enjoy working on computers and like to apply theory to a real business situation.

You will complete two coursework assignments (Customer Experience and Retail Operations) and one 75 minute external written exam (Retail Business). The exam will contain a mixture of short and extended answer questions based on a given context.

Sport Science

Assessment of Practical Performance in physical activity and sport – 40%

Students will be assessed as a player/performer in three different physical activities. One will be in a team activity, one in an individual activity and the third in either a team or an individual activity. For each of the three activities students will be assessed on: their skills and the full performance.

In one activity students will be assessed on the analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about personal improvement in physical activity and sport.

Assessment of theoretical understanding – 60%

Students will sit two theory examination papers lasting 1 hour 15 minutes each.

Paper 1 – The human body and movement in physical activity and sport

Students will be assessed in:

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

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

Students will be assessed in:

- Sports Psychology
- Socio-Cultural Influences
- Health, Fitness and Well-being
- Use of Data

Skills and Aptitudes

If you are physically competent and actively engaged in St Nicholas' extra-curricular clubs or community clubs, then you should achieve highly in the practical area of this course. The theory lessons are Science, Sociology and psychology based; therefore an interest in Human Biology and ability to reflect on socio-cultural issues in sport would be an advantage.

Useful for: Further Education and Career Opportunities in Leisure Centres, Health and Fitness Industries, Tourism, Teaching, the Armed Forces, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy.