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Choosing GCSE courses

Your son/daughter will shortly be choosing GCSE courses. This booklet is designed to give parents and students a brief introduction to the range of courses available and some guidelines for the process of making the selection. It is important to note that this is only the briefest of introductions and there can be no substitute for discussion with tutors, teachers and Heads of Departments. Courses change, students have specific interests and different working styles and all this may mean that one student will perform better in one course rather than another. This booklet cannot convey all of this type of information. However, at the end of this section you will see some example programmes which may help you to make your selections.

If you wish to discuss your son/daughter's choices please come to one of our Parents' Consultation Meetings or get in touch with your son/daughter's Head of Year, Mr Liam Backler.

The curriculum at St Bede's enables students to choose six GCSE courses from a range of nearly thirty. We have designed this curriculum because we believe it is right that young people should be able to study subjects in which they are interested and likely to succeed. Above all, we want their education to be relevant to their lives ahead. Therefore you will find that we treat all subjects equally and that there is no "academic snobbery" attached to any courses.

Nonetheless, there are some subjects which are indispensable; we consider these to be English, Maths and Information Technology. Accordingly, all students follow the former two and all subjects will include the latter in their teaching. In this way, students develop their ICT skills which will stand them in good stead for the rest of their lives. All students study a core of general subjects which are outlined in more detail in the section Core Curriculum Studies.

Most of our students will study for 9 GCSEs, although there are opportunities to study for additional GCSEs through the Activities programme. Where appropriate, some students may take GCSE examinations early, opening the possibility of studying further GCSEs, or moving onto A Level study.

As you embark on choosing GCSE courses with your son or daughter, it may be useful to bear in mind some important criteria upon which to base your decisions:

Enjoyment

It is crucial that students choose subjects that they want to study and that they expect to enjoy. No-one looks forward to two years of study in a

subject that they dislike and de-motivation from the start is a recipe for disappointment.

Ability

We all enjoy doing well and achieving what we consider to be our best, so aim for subjects in which your son/daughter will gain fulfilment.

Careers and university

Even at this stage, there are some careers which require specific subjects. Primary school teachers must have a science GCSE and all university degree courses require qualifications in Maths and English. If your son/daughter has a specific career in mind, please get in touch with Miss Powell (Careers Advisor) to check which courses that they must study.

Coursework

We have highlighted the relative proportions of coursework in each GCSE. Some students perform better in their coursework whilst others find it a struggle.

Sources of Information

There may well be questions you would like answers to or you may wish to know our views on the subjects that your son/daughter should choose. If this is the case, please do not hesitate to get in touch. Your son/daughter's tutor, his/her housemaster or housemistress or Head of Year will be able to help. If you have very subject specific questions, please come to our Parents' Consultation Meeting in March or May, or you may wish to access the relevant web-site that we have given at the top of each subject page.

Changes to the published information

We have made every effort to ensure the information in this booklet is accurate at the time of print. However it is possible that changes may occur from the published material.

St Bede's School reserves the right to alter any of the courses' content and availability without prior notice and also reserves the right to cancel a course at any time without liability. In these circumstances, pupils will be offered appropriate alternatives. We shall, of course, endeavour to consult and advise all parents and students should this become necessary.

Some Example Programmes for Different Students

Stephen - very keen on Sciences

Physics, Chemistry, Biology, French, Geography, ICT.

Susan - a more practical person

Double Science (two choices), Home Economics, Design Technology, German, Business Studies.

Geoffrey - has difficulties with Literacy

Learning Support, Geography, Design Technology, ICT, Single Science, Art.

Fiona - An overseas student, English not her first language

English as a Foreign Language, Double Science (two choices), Home Economics, Art, Geography.

Mary - A Legat Dancer

History, Dance, Performing Arts, Spanish, Double Science (two choices).

Core Curriculum Studies

Your son/daughter will study English and Mathematics alongside their GCSE option choices to give a broad and balanced programme that is tailored to their needs. In addition to this, we run a General Studies programme that encompasses subject areas which we think are central to any young person's education. These are divided up between Years 10 and 11 as follows:

In Year 10 (Lower Fifth)

Physical Education

Following the course in the First Year, PE focuses on health related fitness so that our students understand the importance of exercise, know how to exercise and, we hope, find a style of exercise that suits them. The course includes cardio-vascular work, hand-eye co-ordination, team-work, swimming and survival.

SHAPE

(Social, Health and Personal Education) is a programme to help students develop their emotional health and sense of self responsibility. It covers a broad range of issues including drugs, sex, smoking, relationships, bullying and sometimes issues that the students themselves want to explore.

In Year 11 (Upper Fifth)

Physical Education

Following the course in Year 10, PE focuses on health related fitness so that our students understand the importance of exercise, know how to exercise and, we hope, find a style of exercise that suits them. The course includes cardio-vascular work, hand-eye co-ordination, team-work, swimming and survival.

Careers

It is essential that young people leave school having gained the knowledge and qualifications that they need in order to embark on the right course of Higher Education or to start a career. The course focuses on identifying the key characteristics of different career categories and how to source information about different careers and university courses. Students

complete a Careers/Interests questionnaire which gives each one a profile of their interests and aptitudes matched to potential courses in Higher Education and careers. They are also interviewed and a report is written, which is sent to parents at the end of the Spring term, and includes information on A and AS level courses that should be considered. At the end of the U5 all students have the opportunity to undertake work experience.

What happens when?

The GCSE years at a glance

Lower Fifth

- September **Students start new courses.** If the choice proves unsuitable it is better to make a change within the first three weeks, so that minimum time is lost.
- November **Parents' Consultation Meeting** - a good chance to check early progress.
- November **School exams.** These are formal exams, sat over the period of a week, that test the first few weeks of a course and provide an early indication of progress in the different subjects. They act as a confirmation of choices made.
- April Some subjects will start coursework at this time.
- May **School exams.** Formal exams to test the whole year's work.
- June Intensive coursework period in many subjects leading to holiday work during the summer.

Upper Fifth

- December Most coursework has to be handed in by the end of the Autumn term.
- January **Mock exams.** GCSE papers marked to GCSE criteria and graded accordingly. They form an important assessment from which to start the final push towards exams.
- May **GCSE exams start and continue throughout June.**
- August **GCSE results are published on the fourth Thursday in August.**

Art and Design

GCSE

Specification: 2AD01, 2FA01, 2TD01, 2TE01, 2PY01, 2GC01

Board: Edexcel

Website: www.edexcel.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr D. Graham

All candidates experiment with a range of two and three-dimensional work in the first year of the course. They may continue with a broad-based course or specialise in one of the subject areas in the second year. Students are encouraged to develop individual responses and concentrate on areas of the syllabus which they enjoy and experience most success.

Candidates are required to produce two coursework modules, each backed up by the workbooks/sketchbooks which emphasise historical and contextual links with the candidate's practical artwork. Candidates may choose to specialise in:-

- Painting & drawing
- Ceramics
- Graphics & design
- Photography*
- Textiles*
- Or combine several of these

*Outside the timetable during activities

The final exam consists of a ten hour finished piece with preparatory work, which includes research, and work showing the development of a candidate's ideas.

The GCSE course is a useful starting point for A Levels in Art and has relevance to Media Studies, CDT and Theatre Studies. It is an introduction to a wide variety of careers in the field of commercial art, architecture, fashion, publishing and many others.

Coursework: 60%

Examination: 40%

Estimated additional costs: £90 p.a.

Biology

GCSE

Specification: 4411 Modular

Board: AQA

Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Head of subject: Dr P. Allison

The course provides students with the opportunity to extend their knowledge of the natural world through the study of a broad range of biological topics. The course also promotes an investigative approach to learning through experimentation and scientific enquiry. As research advances are made in molecular biology, biotechnology and genetics, a basic understanding of the processes and ethical issues associated with these areas of biology will be an important element in forming opinions later in life.

Key areas of study include: how science works, human nutrition, nervous co-ordination, drug abuse, infectious disease and applied microbiology, variation, inheritance and evolution, human impact on the environment, cell biology, enzymes, photosynthesis and mineral nutrition in plants, homeostasis, exchange of materials and transport systems in plants and humans, kidney function and treatment of kidney failure.

This course is a useful starting point for an AS or A level in Biology and relates well to Geography and the other sciences, and to studies in Citizenship. It may ultimately feed into a range of disciplines in Higher Education or careers including:

- Medicine/Dentistry
- Marine Science
- Conservation
- Forestry/Horticulture
- Environmental Science
- Nursing
- Food Technology
- Biochemistry/Molecular Biology
- Biological Research
- Pharmacy
- Forensic Science

Centre based assessment: 25%

Examination: 75%

Business Studies

GCSE

Specification: 1503

Board: Edexcel

Website: www.edexcel.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr G. Parfitt

This popular course introduces students to key areas such as marketing, finance, production and human resources and is an ideal introduction to the world of business. Students will gain an insight into a wide variety of business activities and develop a commercial awareness that will be relevant to them whatever their ultimate career path.

The coursework project allows students to conduct their own research and develop their knowledge in a specific business area. The course lays an appropriate foundation for students wishing to study either business or economics at advanced level or for someone wishing to start out on a career.

Coursework: 25%

Examination: 75%

Applied Business Studies (Double Award)

VGCSE

Specification: 2306

Board: Edexcel

Website: www.edexcel.org.uk

Head of Subject: Mr G. Parfitt

The GCSE in Applied Business is a double award so students are awarded two grades. The qualification consists of three compulsory units. Two units are internally assessed through the production of portfolios, and one is externally assessed by a written examination.

Students taking this qualification will gain a general understanding of business and investigate the part people play in it. They will learn about the departments that make up a business and how outside influences affect the decisions that businesses make. For example, portfolio projects may require them to act as consultants who have been asked to look at possible opportunities and problems the company might face in the future and write a report to management. They may also be asked to take the part of a manager interviewing a school leaver for a job and record their involvement.

As part of the course students will also take a written exam paper on Business Finance. They will learn to identify the main costs and revenues of a business and how these figures can be included in a profit and loss account and to calculate at what point a business starts to make a profit.

Students gaining a GCSE in Applied Business will have access to a range of career and further education opportunities. If they wish to continue studying in a vocational context, they may consider the Advanced VCE Business course or follow a more traditional Business or Economics 'A' level. Alternatively, it is an ideal qualification if they wish to go straight into employment, because it gives students an understanding of how businesses are organised and the importance of staff and customers.

Coursework: 66.6%

Examination: 33.3%

Chemistry

GCSE

Specification: 4421

Board: AQA

Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr A. Webb

It is increasingly important for us to understand the complex technological world we live in. In this course, students will develop an insight into how the molecular world explains our everyday lives and will develop skills to plan and carry out a range of investigations. Critical evaluation of their own data and that obtained from other sources is another important feature which is especially relevant to our changing world.

This course is suitable for students who have good analytical and numerical skills. The main content of the course is taught through the following units:
Unit 1 - studying the extraction of metals from their ores, industrial processes, organic chemistry, as well as the study of plant oils and changes to the earth and atmosphere.

Unit 2 - the classification of materials through the examination of atomic structure and bonding, identifying the properties of materials, quantitative studies, the rate of chemical reactions and energy transfer in reactions as well as the study of ions in solution.

Unit 3 - the development of the Periodic Table, the strength of acids, aqueous chemistry, the identification of chemicals through chemical testing and further study of energy transfer in reactions.

They will study chemistry through practical investigation, linking ideas to experimental evidence, so acquiring a systematic body of knowledge. There is an Investigative Skills Assignment, which is assessed in the school and carries 25% of the marks.

This course is a useful starting point for 'A' levels in all the Sciences and for careers in any science, medicine or engineering discipline.

Practical: 25 %

Examination: 75%

Citizenship Studies

GCSE Short Course

Specification: 3280 (Short Course) Board: Edexcel.

www.edexcel.org.uk

Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr D Bowden

Citizenship is an inspiring curriculum subject which, as part of a national initiative, aims to provide a central part of our General Studies and P.S.H.E programme. Its overwhelming aim is to inspire our students to become well informed and rounded individuals, who are engaged in the society in which they live.

This course is a full GCSE, and there is also an opportunity to pair this with Communication Key Skills. The Citizenship syllabus is split broadly into two main areas:

Firstly the course involves the study of themes such as: the nature of communities, multi faith societies, social and ethical issues, environmental issues, prejudice and discrimination, politics and the media, the global village and economic issues. These are examined in a paper at the end of the two years.

The coursework part of the course is entirely involved in participation and involvement in projects. Students are required to involve themselves in groups and teams that plan and undertake activities that enhance, in some way, the community in which they live.

With such a heavy emphasis on 'participation', this course seeks above all to inspire students to become positively involved in the community and world around them. The course is by nature inclusive and anyone can find success within it. In addition, the Key Skills level two qualification provides 10 UCAS points; and the Citizenship syllabus in an excellent grounding for students wishing to study A level Politics.

Coursework: 60%

Examination: 40%

Communication

Key Skills

Specification:

Board: Edexcel

Website: www.edexcel.org.uk

Head of subject: **Mr R. Mills**

The UK Government and employers believe that there are essential skills which all students entering the workforce should have. These skills should be transferable, therefore increasing the flexibility of the worker. Key Skills include communication, application of number, IT, problem solving, working with others and improving our learning.

St Bede's has identified the importance of Key Skills for its students. Communication is essential in any area of work - dealing with clients, colleagues, managers, both written and verbally. Therefore, we are offering it alongside the Citizenship Course, as the two syllabuses fit neatly together.

Your son/daughter will obtain a half GCSE for Citizenship and also 10 UCAS points for the Key Skills Level 2 Qualification in Communication. Both these qualifications carry a lot of weight in a personal statement or C.V.

Coursework: 50% (Portfolio)

Examination: 50%

Design and Technology

GCSE

Product Design

Specification: 1973

Board: Edexcel

Website: www.edexcel.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr P. Edwards

This course has been extremely popular for many years and has led to some exciting products being designed and manufactured, predominantly from materials such as woods, metals or plastics. This course will appeal to those who have an interest in how things work and are made, and to those who are interested in designing and making their own products. Candidates should possess a lively and inquiring mind, an interest in products around them and an interest and ability in creating and making their own designs. The majority of the course is based upon the research, design, manufacture and evaluation of one minor and one major piece of coursework. In addition, students learn about materials, tools and industrial processes. This course is a useful starting point for A levels in Product Design, Art & Design, Physics, I.T., Ceramics and Theatre Studies. It may lead towards Engineering, Product Design, Industrial Design, Interior Design, Sciences, Art, Teaching, Building, Surveying, Architecture, Electronics, Environment in Higher Education.

Estimated additional cost for books, materials and consumables: £75

Coursework: 60%

Examination: 40%

Design and Technology

GCSE

Systems and Control

Specification: 1974

Board: Edexcel

Website: [www. Edexcel.org.uk](http://www.Edexcel.org.uk)

Head of subject: Mr P. Edwards

This course will appeal to those who have an interest in how electronic systems work and are made, and those who are interested in designing and making their own electronic products. Candidates should possess a lively and inquiring mind, an interest in products around them and an interest and ability in creating and making their own designs.

The majority of the course is based upon the research, design, manufacture and evaluation of one minor and one major piece of coursework. In addition, students learn about materials, tools and industrial processes relating to the production of electronic products.

This course is a useful starting point for 'A' levels in Product Design, Physics, I.T and Theatre Studies. It may lead towards Engineering, Product Design, Industrial Design, Computer science, Teaching and Electronics in Higher Education.

Estimated additional cost for books, materials and consumables: £75

Coursework: 60%

Examination: 40%

Drama

GCSE

Specification: J315

Board: OCR

Website: www.ocr.org.uk

Head of subject: Miss S. Cakebread

GCSE Drama is an excellent course for developing confidence, self-expression and an enquiring mind. It builds teamwork and encourages collaboration as well as a sense of responsibility.

The course examines diverse approaches in theatre and encourages students to be self-motivated, disciplined, methodical and to work as a team. Both practical and written work are crucial to the students' progress in the course and a portfolio of assignments is kept by each student. Students who are self-motivated and interested in exploring a wide range of theatre practices would be well suited to this course.

Students study a wide variety of theatrical styles and conventions. They are expected to plan, perform and reflect upon their own works.

The course provides a solid foundation for those students interested in both A-level Theatre Studies and Performing Arts.

Estimated additional costs (i.e. theatre trips £50)

Coursework: 60%

Practical Examination: 40%

English (Including English Literature)

GCSE

Specification: 1500

Board: OCR

Website: www.ocr.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr P. Gibbs

At all times, and in all situations, the ability to communicate clearly and effectively is vital. That is why the study of English is given such importance both nationally and at St Bede's, where every student for whom English is their first language takes the English GCSE; the vast majority take GCSE English Literature as well.

Crisp, clear and accurate communication is the ultimate goal of this English Language course. An appreciation of the techniques employed by writers, an ability to sort out fact from opinion, an awareness that not everything can be taken at face value: these are the attributes required to succeed. In addition to the work undertaken for the English GCSE, students taking the Literature GCSE will study a further three texts on which they will be examined. Plays, novels and a selection of poetry will be covered.

Whatever A levels or further study a student is drawn to and whatever career he or she embarks upon, English is an essential GCSE.

Estimated additional costs: £30 per GCSE

Literature

Coursework: 30%

Examination: 70%

Specification: 1900

English

Coursework: 40%

Examination: 60%

Specification: 1901

Board: OCR

Website: www.ocr.org.uk

IGCSE English (First Language English and English Literature)

Each year, a small number of students study for the International GCSEs in English, as an alternative to the standard GCSE qualifications.

Board: OCR

Website: www.ocr.org.uk

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Environmental Science

GCSE

Specification: 3441

Board: AQA

Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr P Juniper

In our increasingly technological world, it is important that young people in particular, become more aware of the impact of human progress on the environment. This course provides students with the opportunity to study a wide range of issues of environmental importance and the scientific principles and concepts which underpin them. The emphasis of the syllabus content is on a scientific approach to the study of the environment and to provide pupils with the knowledge and understanding to make informed judgments on matters where humans are, or maybe in future, in conflict with the environment. In addition to helping students acquire subject knowledge, this specification allows students to:

- 1). Study a hands-on science, learn about important global issues and understand future global changes.
- 2). Raise their environmental awareness and learn how to reduce their ecological footprint.
- 3) Make informed decisions about political issues.
- 4) Model environmental hazards in the laboratory and develop challenging fieldwork skills.

This course can be studied in combination with any other GCSE science course on offer. The course leads towards the study of environmental science at AS/A2 level and provides a route into a wide range of higher education courses and careers including Conservation, Forestry, Horticulture, Environment Science, Ecology, Marine Science, Biological Research.

Small additional costs may be incurred for travel to field sites.

Coursework: 25%

Examination: 75%

Small additional costs may be incurred for travel to field sites.

Geography

GCSE

Specification: A1312

Board: Edexcel

Website: www.edexcel.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr R Hart

Geography is concerned with the environment in which we live and how we interact with that environment. This may determine our quality of life and that of our children. The course is ideal for anyone who has an interest in the world around them and an enquiring mind.

Basic numeracy and ICT skills are an advantage whilst lateral thinking is the mark of the outstanding geographer. The course focuses on a study of the following key topics:

- The Coastal Zone - a study of how physical and human processes interact to shape our coastlines
- The Challenge of Weather and Climate - a study of how the weather and climate may vary from place to place and from time to time, including a focus on global climate change
- The Restless Earth - a study of the Earth beneath our feet and the affects this environment can have on our lives.
- Population Change - a study of the changing numbers, and movements, of people on our planet and the impact this can have on us and our environment.
- The Development Gap - a study of humans' desire for a better quality of life and the inequalities that exist in our world
- Tourism - a study of this growing industry, why it has grown and the impact it can have on people, and different places

Examples are drawn from Developed and Developing countries and fieldwork is an integral part of the course. Geography bridges the gap between the Sciences and the Arts. It may lead to Science A levels or Humanities and to a wide number of career areas such as Planning, Cartography, Development work, International Relations and more general areas such as Business and Accountancy

Additional cost may be incurred for fieldwork of approximately £150 - £200

Controlled Assessment: 25%

Examination: 75%

History

GCSE

Specification: 1607C

Board: OCR

Website: www.ocr.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr R. Frame

History at GCSE gives students a broad perspective of 20th Century European History, including British and American History, vital world events, global politics and economics. The coursework component considers the changing role and status of women. In helping students to identify links between the present and the past, the subject shapes and deepens the students' understanding of the contemporary world; concepts such as peace-keeping, origins of conflicts, totalitarian and authoritarian states are examined. Furthermore, there are ample opportunities to develop the skills of communication (both oral and written), academic essay writing, analysis and synthesis. A major focus of the programme is to develop the ability to interpret information and offer a sound argument.

An interest in politics, law, contemporary affairs and journalism are assets to students of this course.

History GCSE will lead naturally into all Humanities and will underpin studies in creative arts. Beyond A level it is a foundation for Law, Economics and Management, Politics, Civil Service, Sociology, Journalism, Media, Publishing, Film Making.

Additional cost may be incurred for fieldwork of approximately £150 - £200

Coursework: 25%

Examination: 75%

Home Economics: Food and Nutrition

GCSE

Specification: 1973

Board: OCR

Website: www.ocr.org.uk

Head of subject: Mrs C. F. Ballard

Head of Subject: Mrs. C Ballard

This course provides a balance between practical and theoretical work. It covers six main areas of study: Nutrition and Health; Food Commodities; Meal Planning; Food Preparation and Cooking; Food Safety and Preservation and Consumer Education.

The course is designed to develop an understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet and lifestyle. It promotes a range of skills including food preparation, problem solving, communication and presentation, particularly through the coursework element.

The course is a useful starting point for an A level in Home Economics and will complement a variety of subjects including Biology, Human Physiology, P.E. Business Studies and Media Studies. Thereafter the subjects may lead towards careers in health care, dietetics, food industry, events management and sport.

Ingredients provided at cost price approximately £160.00.

Coursework: 60%

Examination: 40%

Ingredients provided at cost price.

Information Technology

GCSE

Specification: 3522 Spec B

Board: AQA

Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Head of Subject: Mr A. Hayes

GCSE ICT is an ideal preparation for today's technological world in which ICT touches every part of our daily lives. The course will develop students' practical ICT skills and extend their knowledge and understanding of ICT systems.

The course is based on practical work and problem solving and will involve students in developing real life ICT systems.

All the key pieces of software are included: word processing, databases, spreadsheets, desktop publishing, communications software, modelling/simulations, data logging and computer control.

Students will gain an insight into how computer systems work, computer networking, programming, communications and the Internet.

Students will consider the issues that are facing people as a result of the ever expanding use of ICT systems and the Internet.

The course provides foundations for an A level in ICT and offers skills which can be utilised in all subject areas. Students with well developed ICT skills are highly valued and sought after in all areas of employment.

Coursework: 60%

Examination 40%

Latin and Greek

GCSE

Specification: 1941/1942

Board: OCR

Website: www.ocr.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr J. David

At first glance these subjects have little relevance through direct application, but as an academic discipline they offer excellent mental fitness training. The languages are an invaluable aid for English skills, Botanists, Medics and Lawyers.

Both courses focus on language structure and morphology. Students develop their analytical skills and accuracy. There is some investigation of the relevant culture through a study of literature. Candidates should possess good linguistic and analytical skills and should have some prior experience of Latin or Greek. During the courses students will study some challenging texts and meet some challenging ideas. They should be prepared for a rigorous training of memory, imaginative skills, intellectual agility and accuracy.

These courses are useful starting points for A levels in Languages, English, History, Philosophy, Politics and may lead towards Law, Medicine, Theatre, Languages, English Literature and Creative Studies thereafter.

Latin is offered within the timetable; Greek is provided outside the curriculum, usually as an activity and during lunchtime.

Coursework: 0%

Examination: 100%

Legat School of Dance

Director of Dance - Mary Goodhew

The Legat School of Dance offers intensive dance training with the ability to undertake academic studies in conjunction with a bespoke scheme of dance training. Classical Ballet, Contemporary, Jazz Dance and Tap are offered. If students wish to enhance their timetable still further and the Director of Dance agrees, additional classes are available during Activity and after-school hours in Ballroom, Salsa, Musical Theatre, Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing and Royal Academy of Dance examinations.

This programme prepares students for entry to vocational ballet schools, musical theatre schools and those wishing to consider a Dance Degree or Dance Diploma at colleges and universities. Entry to the Legat School is by audition and interview only. Overseas students may supply a DVD of classwork and have a telephone interview. Students should be proficient in ballet and have had a minimum of four years' dance experience. It is a rigorous course, demanding of the students a professional level of dedication. Students must be physically fit and in excellent health due to the rigors of the programme.

Dancers selected for the Legat Programme should choose the GCSE option as well as the Legat Programme in their timetable. Legat dancers are assessed each term and the summer term assessment will help dancers and their family to make career option choices for the following September. Should it not be considered that the Legat Programme is benefiting a student, the School will discuss what other options are available at the school, thus endeavoring to guide a student's aspiration in the most appropriate manner for future success.

Additional estimate costs £200 per annum

Mathematics

GCSE

Specification: 4301

Board: AQA

Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr P. Wilkinson

In today's complex society, an understanding of the use (and abuse) of numbers is very important. Many career paths are closed unless one has at least a grade C pass in GCSE mathematics which is why, as in most schools, mathematics is a compulsory part of the curriculum.

There are two tiers of entry Higher Tier (Grades A* to D) and Foundation Tier (Grades C to G). The vast majority of our pupils work towards Higher Tier. Examinations occur in June of Year 11 and consist of two, 2 hour papers, the first is a non-calculator paper, the second is to be done with the aid of a calculator.

There is now no coursework element in GCSE mathematics.

Our most able students follow an accelerated programme and are given the opportunity to take their mathematics GCSE at the end of year 10. They then go on to study a more advanced course of Pure Mathematics in Year 11. As well as preparation for more advanced studies in a diverse range of subjects such as Business Studies, Geography, Engineering and the Sciences, a pass in GCSE mathematics at Grade C or better is a requirement for the majority of Higher Education Courses.

Coursework: 0%

Examination: 100%

Modern Languages (French, Spanish, German, Italian)

GCSE

Specification: J730; J732; 1926; J731; 1237; 2IN01 Board: OCR / Edexcel (Italian)

Website: www.ocr.org.uk

Website: www.edexcel.org.uk for Italian

Head of subject: Mr H. Rohmer

The world is increasingly becoming a global village but being an island culture we have tended to rely on others speaking English. As we move closer to Europe we cannot afford to ignore other cultures and their languages. Learning a language not only provides an interesting insight into those cultures, but can also open up a myriad of opportunities in any number of careers later on in life.

These courses aim to develop an understanding of the spoken and written forms of a language in a wide range of contexts. There is a strong emphasis on effective communication and lessons are conducted in the target language as far as possible. Considerable importance is placed on grammar, so as to narrow the gap between GCSE and AS and A level for those students intending to undertake further study of their chosen language. Students wishing to take these courses should have demonstrated a reasonable aptitude for the language concerned and are strongly encouraged to take part in the department's language trips and school exchanges, which cost between £300 and £500. Students will be required to purchase their own bilingual dictionary.

Languages have a direct link with their A level equivalent. Linguistic ability and qualifications are welcomed by all the main universities and a second or third language is viewed as a valuable accessory which will help to gain access to a virtually unlimited range of courses and careers.

Coursework: 25% / 0% *

Examination: 75% / 100%¹

¹ Dependent upon the group in which the student is studying

Additional Foreign Languages

GCSE

Board: Edexcel

Website: www.edexcel.org.uk for Chinese, Japanese and Russian

Head of subject: Mr H Rohmer

Students who are native speakers of languages such as Chinese (Cantonese or Mandarin), Japanese, and Russian may take classes in these languages in preparation for GCSE. Non-native speakers who have displayed a high linguistic ability in one or more of the main languages taught inside the timetable are encouraged to try one of the languages listed above. All of these classes take place outside the timetable and are charged accordingly. Students who wish to study one of these languages, with or without a view to taking an examination, should make this clear when they select their GCSE choices.

There is no coursework element.

Music

GCSE

Specification: 1426

Board: Edexcel

Website: www.edexcel.org.uk

Head of Subject: Miss L Morris

The music GCSE course includes the main strands of performing, composing and listening.

Prospective candidates should have a love of music and a desire to learn more about music in its widest sense. Candidates will study a range of styles from Baroque music to Club Dance and World music. Lovers of all fields of music are equally catered for. The course includes coursework which covers performing (solo and ensemble) and composing and there is also a listening examination.

Students are expected to be at grade 4 standard in their chosen study before the start of the course.

Coursework: 60%

Examination: 40%

Performing Arts: Dance

GCSE

Specification: 3231

Board: AQA

Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Head of subject: Miss M Goodhew

This course is largely practical, incorporating Classical Ballet, Contemporary Dance, Jazz and Musical Theatre. Safe studio practice, Anatomy and Nutrition are taught to lay the foundations for sustained and healthy futures as dancers. Students who follow this course should be energetic, enthusiastic and have a positive creative approach, as part of the course involves composing their own dance pieces. They learn how to choreograph a group work, whose performance is part of the GCSE practical examination. A set dance is taught, which will also have to be performed with good standards of dance technique and artistry.

Each year the AQA Board prescribes the dance work which is to be studied and performed as part of the practical examination. At least four other dance works are analysed and visits to live performances provide the excitement and stimulus to refine students' critical ability in judging choreography and knowledge of the world of dance, which will be tested in the written examination.

Physical Education

GCSE

Specification: 1827

Board: Edexcel

Website: www.edexcel.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr D. Leggett

This course offers a combination of physical and life skills, as well as the analytical ones that are important in all competitive roles. It is appropriate to all levels of ability as students work together and develop coaching strategies. Students investigate body processes and the human response to training before devising and monitoring their own fitness regime.

Students following this course should be interested in participating and learning a wide variety of sports including individual and team based activities. The theoretical components of the course require students to learn how the body works during exercise and how performance can be improved through training and analysing performance skills.

This course is a useful starting point for A levels in PE or Biology, as well as a career in Medicine, Sports and Leisure Studies, coaching or teaching.

Coursework: 60%

Examination: 40%

Physics

GCSE

Specification: 4451

Board: AQA

Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr C Hiscox

We are all born with an urge to understand the world around us. This leads us to ask questions. How does the sun keep on shining? How do lasers and compact discs work? If you find that the more answers you discover, the more questions you want to ask, then Physics is for you. Physics satisfies this curiosity with knowledge. Physics also shows how major scientific ideas contribute to technological change, impacting on industry, business and medicine and improving quality of life. Physics provides explanations for how things happen.

Key areas of study included over the course are: Electricity, Forces and Motion, Waves, The Earth and Beyond, Energy Resources and Energy Transfer as well as Radioactivity. It explains much about the world around us and shows the application of scientific theory in our everyday lives. Students should possess a genuine interest in the subject combined with good numeracy skills. The course requires one piece of coursework, which is then 25% of the total mark. It allows the students to carry out practical investigations, to consider and then to evaluate their own data.

This course is also a necessary foundation for A level courses in Physics or Electronics. Physics provides a route into many careers such as Engineering, Medicine, Finance, Astronomy as well as Physics.

Coursework: 25%

Examination: 75%

Religious Studies: Philosophy and Ethics

GCSE

Specification: 1931

Board: Edexcel

Website: www.edexcel.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr M Rattray

In this course we study whether or not you can prove the existence of God and ask if it is possible to believe in a good God when there is so much suffering in the world. We look at the question as to whether or not you can prove whether there is life after death and what it might be like.

We discuss ethical issues too. We analyse attitudes to marriage, family and sexuality. We do so in a debating style and both those of strong opinions and those with open minds are welcome. We also discuss issues such as racism, whether or not you can justify the levels of poverty in the world, and the place of music and art in religion.

This course provides a useful starting point for A Levels in all the Humanities and Social Sciences, and may lead towards social, cultural, theological and philosophical studies at a higher level.

Coursework: 20%

Examination: 80%

Environmental and Land-Based Science

GCSE

Specification: J650

Board: OCR

Website: www.ocr.org.uk

Head of subject: Mr S Hodges

The course develops the student's understanding of the rural environment in general and of farming and growing issues in particular. The emphasis on practical work makes it suitable for students of all abilities, particularly those who prefer a hands-on approach. Students develop skills in animal husbandry and plant growing and propagation.

We have close links with a local farm which we visit regularly, to give the students the opportunity to handle and care for the animals, and to assist with seasonal tasks. There is a garden in the school grounds to enable the students to learn about growing and caring for plants: vegetables, fruit and flowers. We also study topics related to the rural environment - habitats and land use; this can involve visits to sites locally.

This course is a useful starting point for those who may wish to study courses at Agricultural College (e.g. Plumpton). Students who have studied Rural and Agricultural Science are particularly suited to courses in Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Land Management and Horticulture.

Estimated additional costs: £100 p.a.

Coursework: 50%

Modular Examination: 50%

Science (Double Award)

GCSE

Specification: Science A 4461 and Additional Science 4463

Board: AQA

Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Modular

Head of Subject: Mr M. Costley

Would you like to take all three sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) but only use up two of your options?

Are you looking for a balanced science course that prepares you for any science A-level, and allows you to keep your options open?

Are you looking for a science course that enables you to understand the modern world in which we live?

If the answer to these questions is 'yes', then this is the course for you.

The course incorporates the best features of the separate sciences. It is an excellent springboard for further study at AS or A-level in Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Environmental Science. It also feeds into a very wide range of disciplines in Higher Education and careers including:

Medicine/Dentistry

Forensic Science

Pharmacy

Nursing

Environmental Science

Marine Science

Engineering

Law

Electronics

Computing

Telecommunications

Chemical Industry

Food Science

Sports Science

Business

Education

The GCSE in Science is a double award so students are awarded two grades. The qualification consists of 3 compulsory units: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. There are separate examinations for each of these, totalling 75% of the total marks. Students also carry out two practical investigations, worth 25% of the total marks.

Coursework: 25%

Examination: 75%

Science (Single Award)

GCSE

Specification: Science A 4461
Website: www.aqa.org.uk
Head of Subject: Mr M. Costley

Board: AQA Modular

This course is designed for people who recognise the importance of an excellent science education in the modern world, but would not wish to continue with science to A-level. It will appeal to students who wish to pursue subjects other than science at A-level, but also to any student who enjoys science and recognises the weight a GCSE in Science carries for applications to Higher or Further Education and careers.

It is a balanced science course, i.e. it consists of units on Biology, Chemistry and Physics, whilst emphasising the links between them. It is not envisaged as a passport into specific science-based careers, but it does meet the need to include a GCSE in science as an important part of a modern education. Assessment is by modular tests throughout the course and by the marking of one practical investigation.

Coursework: 25%

Examination: 75%

English as Foreign Language (EFL)

Alongside their GCSE courses non-native speakers of English study EFL as part of their programme. At the start of the course they are assessed to ensure they are placed in a class working at the right level. Classes are taught by a specialist EFL teacher for three hours per week and follow courses leading to an appropriate EFL examination, as well as supporting other subjects and aspects of school life.

EFL Preliminary English Test (PET)

Board: ESOL

Specification: PET

Website: www.cambridge-efl.org.uk

Examination: 100%

An intermediate level exam. Students are taught to cope with everyday written and spoken communications.

EFL First Certificate in English (FCE)

Board: ESOL

Specification: FCE

Website: www.cambridge-efl.org.uk

Examination: 100%

An intermediate level exam. Students are taught to handle the main structures of the language with confidence, demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and use appropriate communication strategies in a variety of situations.

Learning Support

Head of Learning Support: Mrs C Mander

Assistant SENCOS: Mrs S Bunyard

Learning Support is available in place of one or more GCSE subjects. Individual programmes of study are prepared and reviewed termly.

Criteria for choice of Learning Support:

Learning support is desirable for any student who has:

- Difficulty with literacy skills including reading comprehension and writing tasks
- Organisational difficulties
- Slow processing and work rates
- Weak revision strategies
- Difficulty with understanding and information retention
- Difficulty with Maths
- Particularly disappointing examination results

Advantages to students:

- The likely improvement in quality of work and GCSE results
- Improved study skills
- Increased independence
- Improved self esteem
- The quality of GCSE results is far more important than quantity

Examination

The most appropriate access arrangements for each student in examinations will be considered and practised in all school and public exams; additional time, use of readers, scribes, and word processors can all be considered where specific difficulties exist. Once a history of use of concessions is established they can be continued through Sixth Form courses and into Higher Education. Where students require assessments and access arrangements (reader, scribe, separate room) further charges apply.

Programmes of study:

Individual programmes of study are planned with students in consultation with subject teachers, tutors and parents. Targets for each student are then set. The programmes are reviewed at least every term. They might include:

- Continuation of higher level literacy skills
- Revision strategies
- Examination techniques
- Over-learning subject topics

- Advanced study skills
- Support with organisation of self and work
- Development of appropriate working practices
- Essay planning and writing
- Note taking techniques such as mind mapping
- Additional Maths support
- Additional English support
- Determination and practice of access arrangements for examinations
- Updating assessments

Charges:

From September 2009, the cost of Learning Support for one three hour subject block per week is £610 per term. Charges for access arrangements and one-to-one teaching can be discussed separately.

If you would like to discuss this programme with Clare Mander before making any firm decision, please contact her at school on (01323) 443815 or e-mail clare.mander@stbedesschool.org

Curriculum Enhancement Programme

Head of Curriculum Enhancement Programme: Dr Lisa Dart

Introduction

The Curriculum Enhancement Programme (C.E.P.) has been established to further the school's commitment to developing the potential of all individuals. We aim to offer a minority of selected students the opportunity to take a combination² of GCSE, AS or A level courses earlier than would usually be the case.

Programme Selection

As this programme will only benefit some individuals, those students wishing to pursue an individualised programme will be expected to meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrable ability in the subjects they wish to study
- The personal maturity and motivation necessary to undertake such study.

Such students will normally be considered for this programme on the basis of:

- Recommendation by a previous school (e.g. prep school).
- Request by a parent and/or guardian.
- Recommendation of a tutor or subject teacher.

Usually selected students and their parent/guardian will attend a brief meeting with the Head of Curriculum Enhancement to agree the programme to be followed.

If you would like your child to be considered for CEP please contact Miss Dart during the Spring Term, email: lisa.dart@stbedesschool.org.

* As the timetable and resources of the school permit each year.

Updated September 2009
