



KINGHAM HILL  
SCHOOL



# GCSE

PROSPECTUS FOR  
COURSES STARTING 2024

GCSEs at Kingham Hill . . . . .	2
The Grading System . . . . .	4
English and Mathematics . . . . .	5
Additional Subjects . . . . .	5
GCSE Option Subjects - the process . . . . .	5
Provision of Courses . . . . .	5
Animal Management BTEC . . . . .	9
Art and Design (Fine Art) . . . . .	10
Biology . . . . .	11
Chemistry . . . . .	12
Design and Technology . . . . .	13
Drama . . . . .	14
Economics . . . . .	15
English Language . . . . .	16
English Literature . . . . .	17
ESOL - English for Speakers of Other Languages . . . . .	20
French . . . . .	21
Geography . . . . .	22
History . . . . .	23
Latin . . . . .	24
Mathematics . . . . .	25
Music . . . . .	26
Physical Education . . . . .	27
Physics . . . . .	28
Religious Studies . . . . .	29
Spanish . . . . .	30

## *GCSEs at Kingham Hill*

Starting GCSE courses marks an important and exciting step in your educational journey. For many of you, this will be the first time that you begin to have a measure of choice over the direction your life and studies will take, and at KHS there is a full range of options available to you across the sciences and humanities.

Most pupils will take ten GCSEs here: English Language and English Literature, Mathematics, and seven additional subjects including at least one of the Sciences. Making good decisions is vital, of course, so use this document as a starting point. Do talk to teachers, tutors, and your parents. A good rule of thumb, though, is to choose those subjects that you are most passionate about and engaged by, rather than those you think you ought to do for someone else's sake. Do what you enjoy and do what you are good at! I would also advise you to speak to older pupils, especially 6th form pupils, to understand more effectively what it is like to study these different subjects for 2 years.

Please think about this carefully and ask lots of questions if you are unsure about what choices to make.

Mr Last  
Headmaster



# The Grading System

'Old' grades (A* to G)	'New' grades (9 to 1)	
A*	9	The proportion of new 9 to 7 grades awarded is roughly the same as the proportion of old A* and A grades awarded – so at the top end of the grade range, the new system is more specific. In time, this might mean that the top universities will get more exact (and rigorous) in their entry requirements.
A	8	
	7	
B	6	The Department for Education have defined a 5 as a “good pass” (the top of the old C grade) and a 4 as an “awarding” grade (the bottom of the old C grade).
C	5	
	4	
D	3	There is now less differentiation in the grades that do not constitute a good pass – the grades that fall below the old “C or above” threshold. This reflects the fact that under the old system few employers or further/higher educational institutions made much distinction between Es, Fs and Gs.
E		
F	2	
G	1	
U	U	A U is still a U, rather than a 0.

# English and Mathematics

Most pupils will sit a GCSE in English Language and a GCSE in English Literature. A small number of pupils each year begin their studies pursuing a GCSE in English Language only. Mathematics leads to one GCSE, but achieving a pass in both English Language and Mathematics is vital as it is a requirement in most instances for continuation to Higher Education. Any pupil who doesn't achieve a 4 or above in these two subjects is legally required to continue with them over the next two years, until they pass. Some professions also stipulate that a 5 or above is the minimum requirement.

## Additional Subjects

The timetable allows for pupils to take a maximum of seven additional subjects, alongside English and Mathematics. At least one of these subjects must be chosen from the Sciences, but our strong recommendation would be to pick at least two:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- BTEC Animal Management

In place of a GCSE subject choice, some pupils may be advised to take one of the following:

- Greens (additional assistance from the Learning Support Department)
- ESOL (additional support for pupils with English as an additional language, often leading to an ESOL iGCSE)

## GCSE Option Subjects - the process

After consultation with teachers and tutors, pupils will be asked to complete an online form expressing their initial GCSE choices. After February half-term we will then use these preferences to draw up the option blocks. We will endeavour to give every pupil their top choice of subjects, but it may not be possible to accommodate all combinations of subjects. If this is the case, we will contact parents and pupils personally to discuss alternatives. It is possible to switch subjects after the timetable has been drawn up, but from that point choices will be restricted by the confines of the option blocks.

## Provision of Courses

In common with many small schools, we cannot run courses if there is insufficient take-up by pupils. As far as possible we will give advance notice if we are unable to run a course and will help each pupil to find a suitable alternative course combination.

## American Pupils

In addition to English and Maths, American Program pupils should sign up for:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- History
- Geography
- One fine art, performing art, language, or a career/technical class (such as DT)



# *Animal Management BTEC*

(Pearson Edexcel)

## **Course Overview**

This course is a comprehensive introduction to working in the animal management industry. It is designed to provide pupils with a good understanding of the knowledge, skills and practical elements needed to care for animals. Pupils will work with the range of animals within our collection and learn in both practical and theoretical ways appropriate husbandry for meeting, and exceeding health and welfare standards.

Pupils should be prepared to work independently on assignments, meet deadlines and refer to success criteria for guidance. They will undertake weekly practical tasks and care for the animals on site, which may involve getting muddy and working outside in all weathers!

BTECs are vocationally related qualifications, where learners develop knowledge and understanding by applying their learning and skills in a work-related context. Additionally, they are popular and effective because they encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning and to develop skills that are essential for the modern-day workplace. These skills include:

- Team working
- Working from a prescribed brief
- Working to deadlines
- Presenting information effectively
- Accurately completing administrative tasks and processes

## **What does the subject consist of?**

- Animal Handling - Internal Assessment
- Animal Housing and Accommodation - Internal Assessment
- Animal Health and Welfare - External Assessment

All three components focus on the assessment of applied knowledge, skills and practices, with two project based assessments and one external examination taken in the 5th Form.

## **Whom would the subject suit?**

Anyone interested in animals

# Art and Design (Fine Art)

(AQA)

## Course Overview

Art and Design provides a balance with other subjects, giving pupils the opportunity to develop and extend their creative, imaginative and technical skills. Pupils will explore and investigate the visual world through experimentation with a range of traditional and digital media, such as drawing, painting, printmaking, photography and ceramics. They also develop their critical skills, making connections and reflecting on the work of artists and designers, learning to communicate their own ideas and opinions. Pupils are able to express their individuality through sketchbook research and the development of high quality final responses. This is a linear, coursework-based specification and pupils need to be able to sustain a project over a period of some weeks. Independence, self-discipline and resilience are therefore very important as well as commitment and a willingness to respond to feedback.

## What does the subject consist of?

The 'Fine Art' specification allows pupils the freedom to explore ideas, experiences or themes of personal interest in any medium of their choosing. This is a coursework-based subject consisting of two components:

- Component 1 - The Portfolio: consists of Units 1, 2 and 3. This is worth 60% of the final mark
- Component 2 - The Examination Project: an externally set assignment worth 40% of the final mark

### 4th Form:

- Unit 1: 'Structures'  
An introductory project which encourages experimentation in a series of short, fun, practical workshops allowing pupils to broaden their experience and develop their creative thinking.
- Unit 2: "Skills Workshops"  
An introduction to oil-painting, approaches to drawing and ceramics.

### 5th Form:

- Unit 3: 'Personal Choice'  
This is a major, extended project where, with support, pupils select a theme in which they are personally interested and produce an in-depth body of work leading to a final response, using any media or techniques they wish to explore.
- Unit 4: Externally Set Assignment  
This is the examination project. Pupils choose and explore a theme from the AQA question paper over several weeks, developing their own ideas and responses during lessons. The final response is completed over a 10 hour period under supervised conditions.

Work is marked in accordance with the four assessment objectives where pupils are expected to show the ability to respond to artists, record, experiment with materials and ideas and produce a resolved final response. Regular feedback and support is given throughout the two years to help pupils achieve their potential.

## Whom would the subject suit?

Above all, we want to see pupils who show a real enthusiasm for, and interest in, Art and Design. It can be the first step for those pupils considering a career in the creative industries, such as architecture, fashion and textiles, photography, game design, graphic design, illustration, interior design etc. Pupils should demonstrate some ability to draw, experiment with materials and develop ideas. We love to see pupils with imagination, curiosity, a willingness to learn and to challenge themselves. Pupils will need to respond to the work of other artists so some written analysis will be required.

# Biology

(AQA)

## Course overview

GCSE Biology is the study of all living organisms and their interaction with each other and the world around them. It is a fabulous course that provides essential preparation for Biology at A-level or for anyone who is interested in the natural world in general and the living organisms that surround us. You will study things that are very small (cells) and learn about how these work. You will see how the different cells within a plant or animal all work together to allow the organism to work well and learn about how organisms interact with each other and their environment. There are a huge range of practicals that we do throughout the GCSE course and these allow pupils to develop a much deeper understanding of how Biology works.

Biology is a challenging course and should not be chosen as an option just because the other options in the option block don't appeal. A "can do" attitude is extremely important along with a good grasp of the English language and an ability to learn new terms quickly. You need to be able to think in a logical manner and communicate your ideas using precise words. Having good mathematical skills is also very useful for Biology.

## What does the subject consist of?

There are five main areas of study over the course. Of course, there are chapters within each of these and each chapter is broken down into a number of lessons. Here are the five topics:

1. Cells and organisation: cell structure; cell division; organisation and the digestive system; organising animals and plants (four chapters)
2. Disease and bioenergetics: communicable diseases; preventing and treating disease; non-communicable diseases; photosynthesis; respiration
3. Biological responses: the human nervous system; hormonal coordination; homeostasis in action
4. Genetics and reproduction: reproduction; variation and evolution; genetics and evolution
5. Ecology: adaptations, interdependence and competition; organising and ecosystem; biodiversity and ecosystems

Throughout the two years, pupils will complete at least twelve required practicals to achieve their practical endorsement. There are two externally set exams at the end of the 5th Form. Each exam is a written exam of 1 hour 45 minutes. The content of the course will be assessed as well as how this content is applied. There will also be questions about the required practicals and there will be other skills assessed such as mathematical and graphical skills.

## Whom does the subject suit?

Biology suits those with a natural curiosity about the world around them and anyone who has enjoyed the spectacular BBC productions of Planet Earth and the Blue Planet and others. Others choose Biology because they are passionate about conservation and want to reduce the negative impact we are having on the planet. Others are more interested in the human side and want to find out more about how our bodies work. Some prefer the tiny things, the microbes and minibeasts. This course covers all of those areas, so there is a little bit for everyone.

# Chemistry

(AQA)

## Course Overview

GCSE Chemistry is really the study of “stuff”. You will learn about the material world around you - what it is made of, what holds it together and why chemical reactions happen. There is so much complexity, and yet once you see the patterns and principles you can appreciate that Chemistry is simple, but certainly not always easy.

There is much practical work that we do throughout the GCSE course and this allows you to develop a much deeper understanding of how Chemistry works and where we get our ideas from.

The full Chemistry GCSE is a challenging course and should be chosen thoughtfully and carefully. In truth it is not an easy option; it will take full commitment on your part, but the hard work will make it all the more worthwhile when you successfully complete a really rewarding and valuable qualification. A “can do” attitude is extremely important along with a good grasp of the English language and an ability to learn and use new terms well. You need to be able to think in a logical manner and communicate your ideas using precise words. Having good mathematical skills is also very useful for Chemistry.

## What does the subject consist of?

There are ten main areas of study over the course. Of course, there are chapters within each of these and each chapter is broken down into a number of lessons:

- Atomic structure and the periodic table
- Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes
- The rate and extent of chemical change
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of the atmosphere
- Using resources

Throughout the two years, pupils will complete at least twelve required practicals to achieve their practical endorsement.

There are two externally set exams at the end of the 5th Form. Each exam is a written exam of 1 hour 45 minutes.

The content of the course will be assessed as well as how this content is applied. There will also be questions about the required practicals and there will be other skills assessed such as mathematical and graphical skills.

## Whom does the subject suit?

If you are interested - perhaps fascinated - with the key questions of what makes up the world that we live in and how stuff works, Chemistry is for you. It is the beginning of a journey via A level, and university perhaps, into a huge range of possible careers. These include not only material science research and development, but also many of the medical paths such as medicine itself and treatment development, biochemistry, chemical engineering, atmospheric studies - cutting edge ideas, and others that really make a difference in life. If you think you might possibly wish to have the option to study A level Chemistry in the future, then it is crucial to choose Chemistry GCSE.

# Design and Technology

(AQA)

## Course Overview

Design and Technology focuses on the broad range of skills needed for life in the 21st Century. Design and Technology is a fundamental contributor to STEM - Science Technology Engineering and Maths - and is often the subject where pupils achieve the most sense of satisfaction when seeing their ideas realised. Before opting for Design and Technology, it is important to remember that pupils will not be making all of the time. Pupils should also consider whether working on an extended project – lasting up to a year – is going to be something they will enjoy as they will be working on the same project for a long time. This style of working develops useful skills for life beyond school.

## What does the subject consist of?

- Component 1:  
Written examination: 2 hours - consists of a section of core content and one of specialist technical principles  
50% of the qualification  
100 marks
- Component 2:  
Non-examined assessment - a design portfolio answering a specific brief or problem set by the exam board  
50% of the qualification  
100 marks

## Whom does the subject suit?

Design and Technology suits pupils with enquiring minds, who are creative thinkers and who have a good degree of self-management. These skills are nurtured throughout the study of Design and Technology, alongside reflective learning, team-working and effective communication. Examples of some of the skills used in the study of Design and Technology are; listening; reading; note-taking; contributing to class work; technical drawing; mathematical skills; modelling; CAD; manufacturing by hand and using CAM equipment; taking photographs and videos; creating digital portfolios.

# Drama

(AQA)

## Course overview

The AQA GCSE Drama specification is aimed at engaging and encouraging pupils to become confident performers. As such, there is a lot of flexibility in the choice of texts studied and much opportunity for pupils to do what they want as part of the devising component. This qualification is mainly practical, with 60% of the final mark requiring pupils to explore ideas in the classroom. The qualification is also heavily text-based. All pupils are expected to read, analyse, watch and review plays throughout the course.

## What does the subject consist of?

- Component 1: Understanding Drama (40%).  
This is the written exam, consisting of a single exam paper lasting 1 hour 45 minutes.
- Component 2: Devising Drama (40%).  
This is the non-assessed component (coursework), whereby pupils are required to plan, rehearse and perform an original piece of Drama as part of a group. Pupils are also required to document their process throughout the various stages: starting with a response, development and evaluation.
- Component 3: Texts in practice (20%).  
This is a live practical exam and pupils are expected to perform two extracts from a play to a visiting examiner. There is great flexibility as pupils can select a monologue, a duologue or a group piece.

## Whom does the subject suit?

Drama is not just for those wishing to pursue a career in the performing arts industry. This course is accessible to everyone. Pupils will enjoy this Drama course if they enjoy working in a practical and creative way. All pupils will benefit from this course as there are many transferable skills regardless of your career goals. These include problem-solving, collaborating with others, thinking analytically and critically, as well as evaluating effectively. Pupils will gain confidence and have opportunities to pursue their ideas whilst reflecting upon and refining their work.

# Economics

(Pearson Edexcel)

## Course Overview

GCSE Economics provides a well-rounded introduction for the advanced study of the subject. Through learning how to explain and evaluate economic problems and possible solutions, pupils will acquire a way of thinking as economists and develop a logical approach to thinking and reasoning. Pupils will gain an understanding of how to use economic data from a range of sources, such as tables, charts and graphs, pupils will acquire the skills to make informed judgements and to communicate in a clear and concise way. Pupils benefit from these transferable skills in their further study and employment. Economics is an academic subject that is highly thought of both by universities and employers.

Economics degrees have been found to be the second most lucrative degree five and ten years after graduating (after Medicine). However, studying Economics will help with all career paths – whether in the private, public or charity sector.

## What does the subject consist of?

GCSE Economics is a two-year course covering both microeconomics and macroeconomics. Pupils learn microeconomics in the first year through covering introductory topics and the role of markets and money. They then switch to macroeconomics in the second year and cover economic objectives, the role of government, international trade and the global economy.

The key areas of study for Year 1 are:

- The basic economic problem
- The role of markets
- Demand
- Supply
- Price
- Market failure
- Competition
- Production
- Business costs, revenues, profits
- The labour market
- Government intervention

The key areas of study for Year 2 are:

- Economic growth
- Unemployment
- Inequality
- Inflation
- Fiscal policy
- Monetary policy
- Supply-side policy
- Globalisation
- International trade
- Exchange rates

All assessment is through two exams at the end of the course (with multiple choice, short and longer answer questions). These are:

- Paper 1: Microeconomics and Business Economics (1 hour and 30 minutes written paper)
- Paper 2: Macroeconomics and the Global Economy (1 hour and 30 minutes written paper)

## Whom does the subject suit?

Anyone with an interest in current affairs and knowing more about the way the world works. If pupils have a particular interest in business, human geography, or politics then this could be the course for them. GCSE Economics will enable pupils to become better informed and more responsible citizens, consumers and producers, by allowing them to develop an awareness for the importance of the economic dimension to their lives. This enables them to become more confident in the economic choices relating to their life and work.



# English Language

(Pearson Edexcel)

## Course Overview

This course explores the written word and develops pupils' ability to write with precision, power and flair. Pupils read and analyse a range of fiction, poetry and nonfiction extracts as part of the course, whilst being encouraged to read widely of their own volition. English Language is vital for academic attainment across the curriculum, so honing functional writing skills is a key priority: pupils learn to write accurately with ambitious yet precise vocabulary, using coherent structures to present their ideas in the clearest possible way.

## What does the subject consist of?

This subject is now 100% exam based.

- 60% of the grade comprises analysis and comparison of ten non-fiction extracts, alongside a transactional writing prompt. 18 marks are available for spelling, punctuation and grammar, which are marked in the writing part of this exam.
- 40% of the grade is allocated to a second paper with two pieces: an analytical essay based on two prose or poetry texts, and an imaginative writing composition.

## Whom does the subject suit?

Since this is a core subject, every pupil is expected to take it. Investing fully from the earliest opportunity in reading widely, vocabulary learning and improving spelling, punctuation and grammar will pay dividends for all candidates taking this exam.

# English Literature

(Pearson Edexcel)

## Course Overview

This course delves deeply into the ideas, themes and messages of a text. Here, pupils will have the opportunity to explore the psychologies of characters, the motives of authors and the social, political, historical and cultural contexts in which great pieces of literature were created. The aim is for pupils to understand the important role that literature plays in society, and how it encourages us to continue questioning and exploring what it means to be human.

Pupils will study a range of literary genres from the 16th to 21st Century. Pupils will learn to write both concise and extended answers to thematic and character questions, in addition to honing their close analysis. Pupils will also study historical and biographical context and will practise applying this to the literary text to arrive at a deeper understanding of author intention and style.

## What does the subject consist of?

60% exam of 2 hours 15 minutes, comprising analytical essays on:

- Unseen poetry
- Anthology poetry
- Modern prose

40% coursework, comprising two analytical essays on:

- A modern drama text, e.g. *An Inspector Calls*
- A literary heritage text, e.g. *Macbeth*

## Whom does the subject suit?

This subject suits all pupils who love reading, human stories, imaginary situations, time travel and a bit of human psychology. This subject is a great training ground for stretching pupils' comprehension, analytical and evaluation skills a notch higher than average. Pupils need to be willing to embrace texts that contain subtleties and ambiguities, and that belong to very different time periods and cultural settings.



# ESOL - English for Speakers of Other Languages

(Pearson Edexcel IGCSE English as a Second Language)

## Course Overview

ESOL lessons and qualifications provide the chance for pupils with English as a second language to consolidate and expand their knowledge of both spoken and written forms of English.

## What does the subject consist of?

Classes involve in a variety of communicative, interactive activities, pair and group work, class discussions and language exercises associated with a range of topics. Comprehension is improved as is the ability to use more complex forms of the language. In addition, there is a focus on various aspects of British life and culture as pupils prepare for further study in an English-speaking environment.

Cambridge First (FCE), Cambridge Advanced (CAE) and the Edexcel iGCSE in English as a Second Language are linear qualifications. All units must be taken at the end of a course of study. Pupils may sit a Cambridge exam at the appropriate level in 4th and 5th Form and are entered for the IGCSE at the end of the course.

Pupils taking ESOL do not undertake any coursework, the qualifications are 100% externally assessed, with the choice of an additional, separate speaking endorsement at IGCSE.

Tests measure achievement against many of the benchmarks of Levels B1-C1 of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

# French

(Pearson Edexcel)

## Course Overview

The Edexcel IGCSE in French is an excellent qualification for developing further the skills pupils have already learnt, helping them to produce impressive spoken and written French. It forms a very good stepping stone to A Level. The IGCSE is highly respected by universities as a challenging benchmark qualification.

In French, pupils will have to understand spoken and written French and speak and write as fluently as possible. The course is topic-based, divided into the following five themes:

1. Home and abroad
2. Education and employment
3. Personal life and relationships
4. The world around us
5. Social activities, fitness and health

## What does the subject consist of?

The final examination (taken at the end of the 5th Form) consists of three papers:

- Paper 1 - Listening (35 minutes - 25% of overall marks)
- Paper 2 - Reading and Writing (1 hour 45 minutes - 50% of overall marks)
- Paper 3 - Speaking (10 minutes - 25% of overall marks)

## Whom does the subject suit?

French is a language which can open up many doors in the future: it is therefore particularly suited to pupils who see themselves as global citizens. Studying French will ensure pupils broaden their horizons beyond these islands. It is important to note, however, that French is a challenging subject and it may not suit everyone. To succeed in the subject, pupils will have to work hard and need to take responsibility for reviewing and practising their language skills outside lesson and prep time. Like playing a musical instrument, speaking a foreign language only improves through practice and performance.

# Geography

(Pearson Edexcel)

## Course Overview

Geography is a topical subject that helps pupils make sense of the world around them. Michael Palin recently said that Geography “..... broadens the mind. That’s one obvious thing, but also I think it just helps us to understand how other countries are the way they are, and this is really very important in just helping us to realise that we all share the same planet and we should know more about what makes us different as well as what makes us similar.”

Geography GCSE will help pupils to think deeply about some of the most pressing issues of our time by deepening their understanding of geographical processes and the impact of complex people-environment interactions.

## What does the subject consist of?

The topics you study are divided into physical and human ones and include:

- Hazardous Earth (Climate Change & Geophysical Hazards)
- The UK’s Evolving Physical Landscape
- Development Dynamics
- Challenges of an Urbanizing World
- The UK’s Evolving Human Landscape
- Geographical Investigations (Fieldwork)
- People and the Biosphere
- Forests Under Threat
- Consuming Energy Resources

There are 3 exams:

- Global Geographical Issues
- UK Geographical Issues
- Decision Making Exercise

## Whom does the subject suit?

The subject will suit anyone who has an enquiring mind about the world around them. Skills which make for a good geographer include organisation, good literacy and numeracy or a willingness to improve these; being ready to state what they think based on evidence, being willing to work and discuss their learning with other pupils and a readiness to ask questions about the world. It is a great subject for keeping options open because it is both a science and a humanity and is multidisciplinary in nature.

# History

(Pearson Edexcel)

## Course Overview

History is a blue riband subject, highly regarded by universities and employers because it allows pupils to demonstrate the ability to think critically and communicate clearly. The course is a mixture of medieval and modern topics and is assessed through three exams at the end of 5th Form; there is no coursework. History is all about intellectual curiosity because trying to work out the motives behind the actions of people in the past is enduringly interesting. You will be fascinated, entertained and along the way you will develop your arguing abilities and evidence handling skills.

## What does the subject consist of?

- Paper 1: Medicine in Britain, c1250–present. Exam: 1 hour 20 minutes (30% of the course)
- Paper 2: Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91 (period study) and the reigns of King Richard I and King John, 1189–1216 (British depth study). Exam: 1 hour 45 minutes (40% of the course)
- Paper 3: Russia and the Soviet Union, 1917–41. Exam: 1 hour 15 minutes (30% of the course)

## Whom does the subject suit?

The intellectually curious and naturally argumentative. History is the key subject if you are interested in becoming a lawyer or in other professions where there is a need to weigh up evidence when making complex decisions.

# Latin

(OCR)

## Course Overview

The OCR GCSE in Latin is aimed at giving pupils the opportunity to achieve a respected qualification in a difficult subject which carries a great deal of kudos. The GCSE forms a very good stepping stone to A Level. The GCSE is highly respected by universities as a challenging benchmark qualification. Studying Latin shows others you are intellectual and that you are able to function at a high academic level. Pupils will automatically stand out from the crowd, since relatively few pupils across the country study the subject. It is an ideal subject to take alongside a modern language or mathematics: subjects which have a good deal of cross-over with elements of Latin. Like with a modern language, universities look kindly on applicants who have studied Latin: they consider it a distinct advantage over other candidates in the application process.

In Latin you will develop linguistic and analytical skills in the following disciplines:

- Language: unseen prose translation into English and comprehension
- Prose Literature: seen translation, comprehension and analysis of texts selected from the works of Tacitus, Pliny the Younger, Apuleius, Cicero, Caesar, Sallust and Pliny the Elder
- Verse Literature: seen translation, comprehension and analysis of texts taken from a book of Virgil's Aeneid

## What does the subject consist of?

The final examination (taken at the end of the 5th Form) consists of three papers:

- Paper 1 - Language (1 hour 30 minutes - 50% of overall marks)
- Paper 3 - Prose Literature B (1 hour - 25% of overall marks)
- Paper 5 - Verse Literature B (1 hour - 25% of overall marks)

## Whom does the subject suit?

Latin GCSE is a course for the language connoisseur. It is challenging and not for the faint-hearted. However, for those who have been bitten by the Latin bug, it is incredibly rewarding. The course is intensive: pupils will learn to be strict with their grammar and picky with their translations. One of the greatest rewards is being able to read some of the wonders of classical literature in the original, so pupils develop an understanding of how the author intended the text to be seen and heard. Pupils will also have to have a keen eye for detail and be willing to learn from their mistakes. They should be highly motivated and ready to work hard to meet the challenge of the course.

# Mathematics

(Pearson Edexcel)

## Course Overview

GCSE Mathematics is a compulsory subject and all pupils will attend and take exams in this subject.

## What does the subject consist of?

In line with the National Curriculum, the course covers number, algebra, ratios, proportion and rates of change, geometry and measures, probability and statistics.

Edexcel Mathematics GCSE is a two year course that is assessed through written examinations in the summer of the final year. The GCSE can be taken at Foundation or Higher level and pupils will be entered at the appropriate level depending on their ability. At Foundation level pupils can gain Grades 1 to 5, whereas at Higher level they can gain grades 3 to 9 (Grade 9 is the highest).

Assessment is through three written papers. The first paper is a non-calculator paper, testing pupils' mental maths ability and placing them in everyday situations where calculators are not always available. The final two papers are conducted with calculators and there is no specific focus to either paper, covering the breadth of the syllabus. All papers carry the same weight, each one is 1 hour 30 minutes and has 80 marks.

## Whom does the subject suit?

This is a compulsory subject so pupils of all abilities take this. We stream all mathematics classes and at Key Stage 4 it is normal to have 4 sets. This allows us to differentiate the work that each set completes and they are able to move at an independent pace, depending on the ability. It would be usual for the less able set to study at Foundation level whilst all other sets would commence the Higher level.

# Music

(Pearson Edexcel)

## Course Overview

GCSE Music combines three musical skills which have been developed throughout 1st - 3rd Form Music lessons: Performing, Composing and Appraising (Listening). As a practical subject, two out of the three components (Performance and Composition) are entirely based on Non-Exam Assessment - we will prepare for these throughout and complete them towards the end of 5th Form. There is one exam paper for Appraising, taken at the end of 5th Form.

## What does the subject consist of?

GCSE Music is made up of three sections: Performing (30%); Composing (30%) and Appraising (40%). Most of the lesson time will be focused on Appraising - looking at 4 main areas of musical study: Instrumental Music 1700-1820; Vocal Music; Music for Stage and Screen; Fusions. Within each of these areas of study, there are two set works (so 8 in total), which showcase a variety of different styles and genres of music. You will learn to describe and analyse each of these pieces of music alongside its historical context. You will also learn key listening skills, and will have plenty of time to practice types of questions as will be seen in the exam paper.

We will work on the Composition section in class time, submitting it by May of 5th Form. As well as guidance from your instrumental teacher and class teacher, you will be expected to spend your own time practicing and honing your Performance.

## Whom does the subject suit?

GCSE Music is for anyone who enjoys making music. You can play an instrument or sing, but we generally suggest that candidates are working at the level of Grade 3 or above, from the start of the 4th Form, continuing to work upwards throughout the course. You do not have to have taken any practical or theory exams, or be able to read music - these will be helpful, but we will learn some notation and musical analysis skills along the way. As long as you want to perform, compose and listen to a range of music, this course is for you!

# Physical Education

(Pearson Edexcel)

## Course Overview

GCSE PE at Kingham is an excellent way to either begin a career in sport or to enhance your passion for sport. The course will develop your knowledge of training to improve sports performance and your understanding of how the body works to keep you exercising. There are close links to the GCSE science syllabus in the four body systems topics of the Skeletal, Muscular, Cardiovascular and Respiratory Systems with knowledge from each being applied to sport and physical activity.

## What does the subject consist of?

- Anatomy and Physiology (the body systems and effects of exercise)
- Fitness and Training
- Performance Enhancing Drugs
- Injuries and Injury Prevention
- Health & Well-being
- Sports Psychology
- Socio-Cultural Influences in Sport

## Whom does the subject suit?

This subject is an ideal prerequisite for Ctech Sport which we offer here at Kingham Hill. This could then lead to numerous degrees under the sports and health umbrella. There will always be a desire to improve sports performance and with it, the need for young motivated sports people to enter the profession.

# Physics

(AQA)

## Course Overview

Physics is one of the natural sciences and encompasses the study of the universe from both macro and micro perspectives. From the largest galaxies, some millions of light years away, to the smallest subatomic particles such as quarks, mesons and strings, Physics studies them all.

Physics is based on observation and experimentation and seeks to understand how our universe is so finely tuned as to enable life to exist. It is the study of space and time and how they interact with one another. Physics involves using various formulae to define physical quantities and for understanding how the fundamental laws of the universe apply in different circumstances, and how those laws can be applied; from sending astronauts into space on Space X to searching for subatomic particles in the CERN Hadron Collider. Physics explains the fundamental laws of the universe and introduces concepts that are also important for the study of Biology and Chemistry.

In GCSE Physics, the essential scientific concepts of energy, electricity, the particle theory of matter, atomic structure, forces, waves, magnetism and electromagnetism and space physics will be studied through investigating, observing, experimenting or testing out ideas and thinking about them. This will involve talking about, reading and writing about physical concepts, doing practical experiments, as well as representing Physics in its many forms both mathematically and visually through models.

## What does the subject consist of?

There are four main areas of study over the course. There are chapters within each of these and each chapter is broken down into a number of lessons. Here are the four main areas of study:

1. Energy and energy resources: conservation and dissipation of energy, energy transfer by heating, and energy resources
2. Particles at work: electric circuits, electricity in the home, molecules and matter, and radioactivity
3. Forces in action: Forces in balances, motion, force and motion, and force and pressure
4. Waves, electromagnetism and space: Wave properties, electromagnetic waves, light, electromagnetism and space

Throughout the two years, pupils will complete at least twelve required practicals to achieve their practical endorsement. There are two externally set exams at the end of the 5th Form. Each exam is a written exam of 1 hour 45 minutes. The content of the course will be assessed as well as how this content is applied. There will also be questions about the required practicals and there will be other skills assessed such as mathematical and graphical skills.

## Whom does the subject suit?

If you are entertaining the slightest thought of studying Physics at A-level then you should be studying GCSE Physics. Physics suits anyone who has a curiosity about how and why things are the way they are or why they work the way they do. If you have watched TV programmes such as "The Planets" presented by Professor Brian Cox, or the Horizon episode "Hubble: The Wonders of Space Revealed" or "Shock and Awe: The Story of Electricity" and found yourself engrossed in them - Physics is undoubtedly for you. If your passion for Physics is not like that but you want to understand more about the physical world you live in, then GCSE Physics is also for you.

# Religious Studies

(AQA)

## Course Overview

At Kingham Hill we study Judaism and Christianity due to the close connection in the history of these two great religious traditions. The course itself is broken into a Beliefs and Practices section followed by a Thematic section that looks at ethical and philosophical issues. The themes studied include families and relationships and a comparison with contemporary Western views on these areas of life. We also look at environmental ethics and views surrounding difficult topics such as euthanasia and abortion as well as around modern warfare.

## What does the subject consist of?

For both religions we will cover the following modules:

- Beliefs
- Practices
- Relationships and Families
- Religion and Life
- Existence of God
- Religion, War and Peace

## Whom does the subject suit?

This subject really suits those who are open minded and willing to explore other worldviews and have their own challenged. Pupils do not need to have any religious beliefs but may simply be interested in the phenomenon of religion that has been and remains so pervasive in our culture and beyond. It is a subject that suits those who are academically curious and are willing to engage with questions beyond the everyday.

# Spanish

(Pearson Edexcel)

## Course Overview

The Edexcel IGCSE in Spanish is an excellent qualification for developing further the skills pupils have already learnt, helping them to produce impressive spoken and written Spanish. It forms a very good stepping stone to A Level. The IGCSE is highly respected by universities as a challenging benchmark qualification.

In Spanish, pupils will have to understand spoken and written Spanish and speak and write as fluently as possible. The course is topic-based, divided into the following five themes:

1. Home and abroad
2. Education and employment
3. Personal life and relationships
4. The world around us
5. Social activities, fitness and health

## What does the subject consist of?

The final examination (taken at the end of the 5th Form) consists of three papers:

- Paper 1 - Listening (35 minutes - 25% of overall marks)
- Paper 2 - Reading and Writing (1 hour 45 minutes - 50% of overall marks)
- Paper 3 - Speaking (10 minutes - 25% of overall marks)

## Whom does the subject suit?

Spanish is a language which can open up many doors in the future: it is therefore particularly suited to pupils who see themselves as global citizens. Studying Spanish will ensure pupils broaden their horizons beyond these islands. It is important to note, however, that Spanish is a challenging subject and it may not suit everyone. To succeed in the subject, pupils will have to work hard and need to take responsibility for reviewing and practising their language skills outside lesson and prep time. Like playing a musical instrument, speaking a foreign language only improves through practice and performance.





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