

Table of Contents

Letter from the Headmaster

Introduction 1

Core Subjects

Mathematics 2

English 3

Divinity 4

Modern Languages: French 5

German 6

Spanish 7

Science Overview 8

Biology 9

Chemistry 10

Physics 11

Physical Education 12

Optional Subjects

Art and Design 14

Classics 15

Design Technology 16

Drama 17

Geography 18

History 19

Information Communication Technology 20

Music 21

Other

English for Speakers of Other Languages 22

Learning Support 22



GCSE Courses

When you move into Year 10 next September you will be embarking on an extremely important phase of your academic career, namely your GCSEs. A strong performance at this stage could have a significant impact on your future. It is therefore essential that the subjects you choose are the ones that: a) are relevant to you, b) interest you, and c) give you the best chance of examination success. We have produced this booklet to help you make these choices. In it you will find details concerning the 'core' and the various additional options open to you. I hope you will find it both useful and informative.

We have made it our policy to follow broadly the National Curriculum, while offering a flexibility of choice, and much that goes beyond the National Curriculum. We believe that a curriculum should be broad in the subjects on offer, and balanced in the subjects it prescribes. In particular, by the age of sixteen you should have achieved a good grounding in the Sciences and the Humanities, as well as being literate and numerate. It is these principles that have guided our choice of core subjects and options.

I wish you every success in your GCSE courses.

Mark Slater
Headmaster

January 2010

Introduction

The Core

Pupils follow a core of subjects at GCSE, which consists of the following:

Mathematics, English, English Literature, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, a Modern Foreign Language (French, German or Spanish) and Divinity (examined at the end of Year 10)

Optional GCSEs

In addition to the core, pupils choose a further three subjects from the following:

Art and Design, Classical Civilisation, Design & Technology, Drama, French, Geography, German, Classical Greek, History, ICT, Latin, Music and Spanish.

All pupils take part in a Physical Education programme and have the option to take the PE GCSE as an additional qualification in Year 11.

The Process

A provisional choice will be made by the pupils before the Parents reception in January. At the Parents' Reception there is an information talk about GCSEs and then further discussion with subject teachers. A firm choice is then made and this will be reviewed to ensure that all the combinations will be possible. After the timetable has been set up (normally at the beginning of March) changes to option choices can only be accommodated if the timetable and set sizes allow. Since it may not be possible to offer all combinations of subjects, pupils should consider alternative combinations. Pupils should seek the advice of their Tutor, Housemaster or Housemistress and their Parents to ensure that they have a balanced and sensible set of choices.

When choosing optional subjects it is important to bear in mind personal aptitude and enjoyment of the subject. If a pupil is enjoying the subject and has some ability in it then it is likely that they will achieve their full potential.

Mathematics

The School enters candidates for the OCR GCSE in Mathematics A J562 of the National Curriculum GCSE.

Aims

The broad aims of the GCSE are to:

- develop a positive attitude to Mathematics
- consolidate basic skills and meet appropriately challenging work
- apply mathematical knowledge and understanding to solve problems
- think and communicate mathematically
- appreciate the place and use Mathematics has in society
- understand the interdependence of different branches of Mathematics
- acquire skills needed to use technology such as calculators and computers effectively
- to acquire a firm foundation for further study

The syllabus conforms to the National Curriculum and is assessed under three headings, as follows:

- recall and use their knowledge of the prescribed content (AO1)
- select and apply mathematical methods in a range of contexts (AO2)
- interpret and analyse problems and generate strategies to solve them (AO3)

GCSE Mathematics is assessed by two written exam papers, each of two hours duration, the first being a non-calculator paper and the second a calculator paper both taken in the summer term of year 11. The department enters all candidates for the Higher Tier enabling grades A* to D. For the most able there is an opportunity to take Additional Mathematics which is an ideal preparation for Advanced Level Mathematics but this requires much independent learning and determination.

Those pupils who intend to go on to an AS or A2 level course in Mathematics ought to be capable of obtaining an A grade at GCSE and must have studied the Higher Tier material. The algebra content in the Higher Tier is particularly important as without a secure handling of algebra, AS and A2 level will be found to be very demanding indeed.

The school makes regular contributions to NRICH, a mathematical web page based at the University of Cambridge and MyMaths and also enters many candidates for various National Mathematical Challenge Competitions.

English

The GCSE specification has changed for September 2010. At the time of writing we have been unable to confirm the exact specification that will be followed. The following outline, however, gives an indication of what will be covered.

Aims

The GCSE years in English offer a whole range of opportunities for students:

1. To develop writing and thinking skills considerably, so that in future life you will be able to write in different ways according to what is required at AS / A2 Level, in the workplace or elsewhere.
2. To enhance your ability to speak effectively in different contexts, and thereby boost your self-confidence.
3. To read a variety of interesting and demanding literature (poetry, prose and drama, both older and more recent) and other types of text (such as media and non-fiction, as well as writing from different cultures). Consequently, you will gain a sophisticated sense of how authors use words effectively and be inspired to express yourselves more imaginatively.

Course Content

Pupils will be working towards two separate GCSE grades, one in English Language and the other in English Literature. There will be a variety of coursework, including an opportunity to write creatively as well as about literature. Pupils may also be able to study a film such as 'The Truman Show' or 'Delicatessen'. Some of the coursework you write will count for both GCSEs. There will also be oral coursework, requiring you to speak individually or in groups.

These years are a real chance for you to show development from what you have been achieving in Years 7-9 in terms of the depth and sophistication. You will succeed if you enjoy communicating, appreciate the written word and understand that your ability to use English well in both spoken and written forms is crucial to virtually any future study or career.

Assessment Structure

English Language – Content of course / Assessment

1. Written coursework (20% of final grade): personal and imaginative writing; a response to media texts; writing based on a play by Shakespeare.
2. Speaking and listening coursework (20%).
3. Exam (30%): responses to poetry and stories from different cultures; directed writing.
4. Exam (30%): Responding to unprepared non-fiction texts; directed writing.

English Literature – Content of course / Assessment

1. Written coursework (30% of final grade): three pieces on pre-1914 prose, poetry and drama.
2. Exam (70%): written responses on prose, poetry and drama set texts.

Divinity

Aims

We currently follow the Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies Module A Unit 2 - 5RS02 specifications.

Course content

Unit 2, Religion and Life based on a study of Christianity is a course which explores contemporary moral issues and which gives pupils an opportunity to explore their own as well as other people's views on modern moral dilemmas. Pupils also learn about the traditional and modern teachings in the Christian Church (non-denominational) on those issues and how the Church tries to provide both guidance and support in changing times.

The course is split into 4 units:

- 1. Believing in God** - issues associated with the nature and reasons for belief as well as a look at alternative views on belief in God.
- 2. Matters of life and death** - issues stemming out of contemporary and traditional attitudes to the nature and value of human life (e.g. abortion, euthanasia...).
- 3. Marriage and the family** - issues relating to the changing nature of human relationships and the challenges they present (marriage and cohabitation, divorce and family life...).
- 4. Religion and community cohesion** - issues relating to the changing nature of society and the challenges they present (e.g. racism, sexism, multiculturalism...).

Assessment structure

Each section is tested at the end of teaching and pupils falling short of the Department's expectations re-sit the test or work through it in a Divinity Clinic. There is a full Mock examination at the beginning of the Summer Term; following that every unit is revised and tested prior to the GCSE paper. The examination is two hours long and does not involve any coursework element.

Whilst the course provides a sound grounding for the A Level Theology it is not an essential pre-requisite.

Modern Languages - French

Aims

The French GCSE course has as its broadest aim the desire to provide all pupils with a sound practical knowledge of French. Within this framework, able linguists are stretched well beyond basic competence and weaker linguists are encouraged to acquire the basic communication skills required for success at GCSE.

We assume that those pupils selecting French have followed an introductory course, although we are aware that individual pupils' backgrounds in the language differ and we aim to cater for all cases. However, it is not usually possible to enter the GCSE course as a complete beginner.

Course content

The course is topic-based, concentrating largely on the areas prescribed by the National Curriculum. Wherever possible, French is the language of communication in the classroom for both teacher and pupil. Assessment at GCSE is largely through tests in which questions are mostly in English. Teaching and Assessment are carried out in the four core skill areas - Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing. Following changes in GCSE specifications we have chosen the syllabus provided by EDEXCEL.

The GCSE examination offers papers at two levels (Foundation and Higher) in each skill and we expect most pupils to be entered at Higher Level. There may be individual cases where this is not appropriate and regular monitoring allows us to advise pupils as to which level they should enter, bearing in mind that a good GCSE grade can be achieved without sitting Higher Level in all skills.

Those pupils with aspirations beyond GCSE are encouraged to move beyond the specific requirements of the GCSE examination in order to help bridge the inevitable gap between GCSE-style work and the more rigorous demands of AS/A2 level.

All pupils studying French at GCSE are required to have a bilingual dictionary.

GCSE now specifically involves a cultural awareness of the country whose language is being learnt. Therefore, all Year 10 French GCSE pupils are strongly encouraged to take part in a 7 day study trip over half-term in Nice (South East France). Pupils will have various GCSE-related activities to do throughout their stay.

Assessment structure

Listening and reading are assessed in a terminal exam and are both worth 20% of the overall mark. These exams are available at both Foundation and Higher tiers though it is expected that the vast majority of pupils will be entered at Higher tier. There may be individual cases where this is not appropriate and regular monitoring allows us to advise pupils as to which level they should enter, bearing in mind that a good GCSE grade can be achieved without sitting Higher Level in all skills. Dictionaries are not allowed in either the reading or the listening exams. Writing is assessed in two different tasks which are completed in controlled conditions i.e. they are prepared and conducted in class and sent away to the exam board for marking. The speaking exam also has a new format. Two tasks are prepared in class and examined and assessed by the teacher-examiner. Samples of pupils' work are sent to the board for moderation. These exams are not tiered.

Modern Languages - German

Aims

The German GCSE course has as its broadest aim the desire to provide all pupils with a sound practical knowledge of German. Within this framework, able linguists are stretched well beyond basic competence and weaker linguists are encouraged to acquire the basic communication skills required for success at GCSE.

We assume that those pupils selecting German have followed either a one-year course in year 9 or a two-year course in years 8 and 9. We can also cater for those with a wider background in the language.

In addition to the normal programme of classes, every year we organise the well-established German Exchange with the Karls gymnasium in Stuttgart. Our pupils spend a week in Germany at the end of the Easter Term and the German pupils come to England for a week at the end of the Summer Term. We encourage all our German GCSE pupils in year 10 to participate.

Course content

The course is topic-based, concentrating largely on the areas prescribed by the National Curriculum. Language is practised through studying topics such as Home, Family and Relationships; Free Time and Local Area. Wherever possible, German is the language of communication in the classroom for both teacher and pupil. Each of the four skill areas can be examined at Foundation or Higher Level. In the academic year 2009-10 we will start teaching the Edexcel specification.

Listening and Reading

These skill areas each take up 20% of the total mark and consist of tests to assess pupils' ability to comprehend spoken and written German in a variety of formal and informal contexts. Questions will require non-verbal responses or answers written in English.

Speaking and Writing

These skill areas each take up 30% of the total mark and consist of controlled assessments conducted over the two years of the GCSE course. In **Speaking**, pupils will have to submit two tasks of different types, each lasting 4 to 6 minutes and from different contexts. In **Writing**, pupils entering for the Higher Tier will expect to submit two tasks prepared in class and conducted under controlled conditions. Each task must be completed in a lesson and must be at least 200 words long. In both Speaking and Writing, pupils will build up portfolios of tasks from which they will submit the best for each skill. The Speaking tests are internally assessed and externally moderated, while the Writing tests are externally examined.

Modern Languages - Spanish

Aims

The Spanish GCSE course aims to provide all pupils with a sound practical knowledge of Spanish and an understanding of Spanish culture. Able linguists are stretched well beyond basic competence in the language. Weaker linguists are encouraged to acquire the basic communication skills required to communicate in Spain, and for success at GCSE.

Spanish at GCSE is equally appropriate as an option for pupils who started Spanish in Year 9, as for those who have studied the language for longer. The background to the language at this stage is less important than the motivation and willingness to learn a language. Many of our top grades are gained by pupils who started Spanish in Year 9.

Course content

The course is based on topics of interest to all young people. Wherever possible, Spanish is the language of communication in the classroom for both teacher and pupil. Assessment at GCSE is carried out in the four core skill areas - Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing. We follow the Edexcel syllabus and writing is done as coursework, not as a final examination. The GCSE examination offers papers at two tiers, Foundation and Higher, in each skill. The skills may be offered for examination at different levels. Regular monitoring allows us to advise pupils as to which level they should enter, bearing in mind that a good GCSE grade can be achieved without sitting Higher Level in all skills.

Those pupils with aspirations beyond GCSE are encouraged to move beyond the specific requirements of the GCSE examination in order to prepare for the demands of AS and A2.

In Years 10 and 11 we offer a one week home stay trip to Spain in the Easter holidays. We strongly encourage all Spanish GCSE pupils to take advantage of this opportunity.

Assessment structure

The reading and listening papers account for 20% of the course respectively and the oral and writing papers account for 30% of the course respectively.

Listening and Reading are assessed separately in two final examinations. Speaking is assessed through recordings of two speaking tests of 4-6 minutes and these are done during the course, not as a final examination. Writing is assessed through two controlled assessments also done during the course as opposed to as a final examination.

Science - Overview

Aims

This suite of qualifications will lead to three GCSE grades (GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry and GCSE Physics), and will provide an excellent grounding for any of the sciences studied at A-level at The Leys.

The aim of the courses is to provide a worthwhile programme of study for all pupils, whether or not they go on to study Science beyond the age of 16. In particular, the topics covered should enable pupils to acquire a systematic body of scientific knowledge and develop an understanding of concepts, principles and applications of Biology, Chemistry and Physics in the modern world. The intention is that in following the course the pupils will develop an informed interest in matters of scientific import; recognise the usefulness and limitations of the scientific method and the way it is reported; and appreciate its applications in other disciplines and in everyday life.

Assessment structure

The pattern of assessment will be uniform throughout the sciences with three 45 minute written papers per science sat in the summer of Year 11. Each of the written papers will contribute 25% towards the students' marks. Throughout the course, pupils will also carry out practical work that will be conducted in lesson time and assessed internally. This will contribute the final 25% of students' marks. Students will not be expected to conduct any additional coursework outside lessons.

There are two tiers of assessment: Foundation (Grades G-C) and Higher (Grades D-A*). Students can be entered for either tier on each and every unit, significantly reducing the restriction on the final grade pupils can obtain.

The GCSE course has already started, in all science subjects, in Year 9.

Science - Biology

Year 9

Cell Biology	From what are animals and plants built?
Digestion & Health	What are enzymes and what are some of their functions? What can we do to keep our bodies healthy?
Exercise & Health	How does exercise affect the exchanges taking place within the body?
Ecology	What happens to energy and biomass at each stage in a food chain? What happens to the waste material produced by plants and animals? What determines where particular species live and how many of them there are? How do humans affect the environment?

Year 10

Plant Nutrition	How do plants obtain the food they need to live and grow?
Transport	How do dissolved substances get into and out of cells? How do dissolved substances get into and out of plants and animals? How are dissolved materials transported around the body?
Sensitivity	How do human bodies respond to changes inside them and to their environment? How do we use/abuse medical and recreational drugs?
Homeostasis	How do our bodies keep internal conditions constant? How do exchanges in the kidney help us to maintain the internal environment in mammals and how has Biology helped us to treat kidney disease?

Year 11

Genetics	Which human characteristics show a simple pattern of inheritance? Why are individuals of the same species different from each other? What new methods do we have for producing plants and animals with the characteristics we prefer? Why have some species of plants and animals died out? How do new species of plants and animals develop?
Microbiology	What causes infectious diseases and how can our bodies defend themselves against them? How are micro-organisms used to make food and drink? What other useful substances can we make using micro-organisms? How can we be sure we are using micro-organisms safely?

Science - Chemistry

Year 9

Matter	Atoms, Elements, Compounds, Molecules and Mixtures.
Modern Materials	Composites, alloys, smart alloys, nano-materials and their structure and bonding.
Acids/Bases/Alkalis	Definitions, behaviour, classifications, pH scale and introductory titrations.
Energy Changes	Exothermic and endothermic, fuels; pollution, global warming and global dimming.
Earth Science	Continental Drift, Plate Tectonics, Rocks; earthquakes and volcanoes.

Year 10

Chemical Changes	Minerals; extraction of metals from ores, mining and quarrying; limestone.
Transition Metals	Production of iron, properties of transition metals, alloys, purification of copper, % composition
Atomic Structure And Periodic Table	Sub-atomic particles, ionic and covalent bonding, structures and properties. Historical perspectives; trends and patterns; Groups 1 and 2; Noble gases;
Rates of Reactions	Factors affecting rate of reaction; investigative techniques; catalysis
Organic Chemistry	Crude oil; fractional distillation, hydrocarbons, polymers, alkane and alkene chemistry

Year 11

Food Processing	Diet; emulsions; extraction of oils, food additives, chromatography
Chemical Analysis	Anion and cation testing, gas tests, introductory spectrometry, forensic science. Equations, moles; empirical formulae, calculations
Ions in Solution	Salt formation, precipitation reactions; redox chemistry; electrolysis
Water	Solution chemistry; water cycle; solubility curves; safe drinking water; hard and soft water

Science - Physics

A summary of the course content is given below, although this is not the order in which it is taught. About half of the work for Physics 1 will have been completed in year 9. Currently each unit is separately examined at the end of year 11.

Physics 1

- 11.1 How is heat transferred and what factors affect the rate at which heat is transferred?
- 11.2 What is meant by the efficient use of energy?
- 11.3 Why are electrical devices so useful?
- 11.4 How should we generate the electricity we need?
- 11.5 What are the uses and hazards of the waves that form the electromagnetic spectrum?
- 11.6 What are the uses and dangers of emissions from radioactive substances?
- 11.7 What do we know about the origins of the Universe and how it continues to change?

Physics 2

- 12.1 How can we describe the way things move?
- 12.2 How do we make things speed up or slow down?
- 12.3 What happens to the movement energy when things speed up or slow down?
- 12.4 What is momentum?
- 12.5 What is static electricity, how is it used and how it relates to electric currents?
- 12.6 What does the current through an electrical circuit depend on?
- 12.7 What is mains electricity and how can it be used safely?
- 12.8 Why do we need to know the power of electrical appliances?
- 12.9 What happens to radioactive substances when they decay?
- 12.10 What are nuclear fission and nuclear fusion?

Physics 3

- 13.1 How do forces have a turning effect?
- 13.2 What keeps bodies moving in a circle?
- 13.3 What provides the centripetal force for planets and satellites?
- 13.4 What do mirrors and lenses do to light?
- 13.5 What is sound?
- 13.6 What is ultrasound and how can it be used?
- 13.7 How can electricity be used to make things move?
- 13.8 How do generators work?
- 13.9 How do transformers work?
- 13.10 What is the life history of stars?

Coursework, in the traditional sense, is no longer a part of this GCSE. Instead, practical assessments (dubbed the Centre Assessed Unit) take place in year 10 and 11 entirely in class which replace what was once an onerous task. These are designed to fit seamlessly in with the teaching of the course.

Pupils should complete this course **extremely well prepared** for an AS/A2 level Physics course together with a thorough understanding and appreciation of the application of a wide range of physics-related topics, from the traditional to the contemporary.

Physical Education

The “Physical Education” of pupils in the School is delivered in three areas:

1. PE Lessons (in timetable time)
2. Games (Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday afternoons)
3. Extra Curricular Sports Activities (hobbies, late afternoon, evenings)

PE and Games are compulsory for Years 10 and 11.

Aims

1. That all pupils learn to enjoy and appreciate some form of physical activity.
2. To provide a balanced, broadly-based series of activities based on the National Curriculum (KS3/KS4).
3. To enable all pupils to appreciate the importance of regular exercise for their own health and fitness.
4. To prepare pupils for participation and competition in sports activities after leaving school.

Course content

In Year 10 all pupils continue with a period of PE each week, following a common course. Areas that have been introduced in Year 9 are developed and both theoretical and practical subjects are covered, with the emphasis being on enjoyment while developing fitness, co-ordination, skills and techniques. Activities covered are Health Related Fitness (everyone is inducted into use of the school gym, and students learn the principles behind designing fitness training programmes, including different methods of training), badminton, swimming/survival, rounders, athletics and tennis. At the end of Year 10 pupils choose whether to take a GCSE in PE.

In Year 11 all pupils have two PE lessons a week. Non-GCSE PE students have two practical lessons, where they have a choice from a great array of activities. Such sports include invasion games (football, basketball, handball), gymnastic activities such as trampolining, racket sports (squash, tennis, badminton, racket ball, table tennis), swimming pool based activities (swimming, life-saving, waterpolo, canoe-polo) as well as use of the gym. The emphasis in these lessons is very much on participation and enjoyment.

For GCSE PE students, they have one theory lesson and one practical lesson a week. On the theoretical side of the subject, pupils will learn about the theory and effects of exercise and training, the prevention and treatment of sports injuries, diet, health and drugs in sport, and how the circulatory and respiratory systems, bones, joints and muscles are involved in physical exercise and adapted through training. Practically, GCSE students are expected to devise, follow and evaluate their own 6 week Personal Exercise Plan to improve their performance in a chosen sport. In addition to this, pupils are required to choose four sporting activities to offer for assessment. Many of the sports are provided in PE, games or extra-curricular activity time, but activities done outside of school are also permitted (e.g. horse riding and skiing). These can be assessed by a qualified instructor with video evidence. Pupils are also examined on their ability to analyse a performance in one chosen sport, demonstrating their knowledge of rules, techniques, tactics and training methods for that sport.

The GCSE examination has proved popular, particularly with the boys and girls who play sport to a high level, and has enabled many of them to obtain a recognized qualification in Sport/PE. The GCSE provides a good foundation for pupils wishing to study AS/A2 level PE.

Approximate GCSE Assessment structure

Practical performance in four activities	50%
Analysis of performance	10%
Written theory exam (Anatomy, Health and Fitness)	40%

Practical Activities for GCSE

(pupils must choose four sports from at least two activity groups)

Games activities

Football, Basketball, Hockey, Netball, Rugby, Water Polo, Badminton, Squash, Table Tennis, Lawn Tennis, Volleyball, Cricket, Rounders.

Gymnastic activities

Synchronised Swimming, Horse Riding, Trampolining, Gymnastics.

Dance activities

Perform one dance: Solo, duet or group; Modern, Contemporary, Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Folk, Traditional or Ethnic.

Athletic activities

Rowing, Weightlifting, Golf, Archery, Athletics (3 events), Fencing.

Exercise activities

Fitness Training (Weights/Circuits/Continuous/Aerobics/Interval), Judo/Karate

Adventurous activities

Sailing, Canoeing/Kayaking, Climbing, Trekking/Orienteering, Skiing/Snowboarding, Boardsailing, Personal Survival/Lifesaving.

Swimming Strokes

Assessment is on technique in two strokes.

Art & Design

Aims

Art is all around us. Last year, over 8 million people visited the Tate galleries. From the infamous theft of the Mona Lisa in 1911, when thousands of Parisians queued to see the blank space left on the wall in the Louvre, to Antony Gormley's 'Angel of the North', seen by over 90,000 people a day from the A1, Art is more popular, hotly-debated and accessible than ever before.

The GCSE Art course provides the scope for pupils to work independently in a creative environment extending the very able pupils whilst also enabling pupils with a high level of interest to achieve highly.

The GCSE course aims to:

- Encourage pupils of ALL abilities to express themselves creatively and have fun whilst doing so.
- Explore a wide range of ideas and materials and develop a variety of new skills and techniques
- Provide a good opportunity to achieve an excellent GCSE grade, whilst following a highly individual programme of work.
- Introduce students to art in a wider context through visits to exhibitions in both Year 10 and Year 11

Course content

Over the two years, pupils will cover two units of coursework. The final examination is an early release paper allowing the students to have plenty of time to develop extensive preparatory work before the timed examination session of ten hours.

Within this structure, the two units are:

Unit 1 Art and design Portfolio

Unit 2 Art and design set Task

Each unit of work will be comprised of:

- ◇ Develop Investigation, research & development of ideas.
- ◇ Refine Experimentation & use of a wide range of media and techniques.
- ◇ Record Observational drawing and recording
- ◇ Respond Study and response to the work of artists –contemporary and historical

Working from a single starting point, students develop their own direction of study with increasing freedom and variety, resulting in an impressive body of work displayed in an exhibition at the end of the course.

Drawing and painting form the backbone of the course, however students are encouraged to try a wide variety of other techniques including: drypoint etching, collography, relief printing, transfer printing, screen printing, textile printing, ceramics and sculpture and mixed media.

Assessment structure (OCR course)

- Coursework: 60%
- Final Exam: 40%

Classics

The Classics Department offers three subjects at GCSE and beyond, Classical Greek, Latin and Classical Civilisation

GCSE Classical Greek (OCR J291)

This syllabus has been designed to accommodate candidates working on limited timetables and is thus, insofar as an intellectually challenging subject can be, user-friendly. Candidates sit four papers as follows

- Greek Language 1
- Greek Language 2
- Greek Prose Literature
- Greek Verse literature

Authors studied for the set texts include Homer, Euripides, Xenophon, Herodotus and Plato. Candidates are thus introduced to the foundational works of European literature in the original language. Not only are the set texts carefully prepared before the examination, but a set vocabulary list eases the burden of revision for the Language paper. Classical Greek is probably unique in the demands it places on pupils at this level and is therefore a natural choice for a bright and creative person who wishes to be stretched.

GCSE Latin (OCR J281)

This syllabus has been trimmed in order to make it accessible to a broader range of candidates, many of whom are working in limited amounts of time. The candidates sit four papers as follows

- Latin Language 1
- Latin Language 2
- Latin Prose Literature
- Latin Verse literature

Latin GCSE offers a number of attractions. Pupils are able to study the major authors of Latin literature in their original language. Authors typically studied for set texts include Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Martial, Cicero and Tacitus. The set texts are carefully prepared before the examination. The study of the language is demanding as well as interesting and fun, forcing pupils to be rigorous and methodical in their approach. A set vocabulary list eases the burden of revision for the Language papers. The study of Latin provides an invaluable, and, for some, indispensable, grounding in appreciating the structures of language and is therefore an invaluable support to the study of English and other modern languages.

GCSE Classical Civilisation (OCR J280)

This popular subject offers makes the Classical world accessible to all, since no knowledge of the Greek or Latin languages is required. Drawing on topics from both Civilisation and Literature, the GCSE is inter-disciplinary, challenging candidates to respond to original source material in a variety of contexts. Topics available from September 2009 will include City Life in Athens and Rome, Homer's Odyssey and Ovid's Metamorphoses, Sparta and Pompeii as well as a range of subjects for an extended essay in the controlled assessment paper. The assessment objectives of the specification ensure that there is always an emphasis on going beyond facts and details to assess and analyse the values of the civilisations being studied.

Design Technology

Resistant Materials Technology 4560

Aims

The Resistant Materials Technology GCSE course offers a broad and flexible approach to the subject

Resistant Materials Technology is a practical subject area. It requires the application of knowledge and an understanding of materials and material processing when developing ideas, producing products and evaluating them.

Candidates are encouraged in their design folders to use a wide range of graphical techniques including freehand drawings, isometric and orthographic drawing as well as Desktop Publishing, Computer Aided Design and other ICT skills.

Resistant Materials Technology is a popular choice, pursued by many to Advanced Level. It offers candidates the chance to get a top GCSE grade through activities they enjoy.

Course content

- The skills, processes and concepts used in designing, including some awareness of economic and business issues.
- The use of computers in design and manufacture. ICT, CNC, CAD, & CIM
- The use of graphics and modelling techniques as specific design tools.
- Materials, material processes, and skills used in the construction of products.
- The use of components, fasteners, adhesives, and man-made materials.
- Safe working practices and British Standards.
- Industrial practices and methods of production.

Controlled assessment

In the Controlled Assessment (ie the coursework) the candidate will select, under guidance, his/her own design and make task. This project will be undertaken mainly in the second year of the course during class time, supplemented by private study. A detailed design folder will accompany the candidate's product.

How is it examined?

Written paper 40% of the total marks

Controlled Assessment 60% of the total marks

Drama

Aims

The course enables pupils to explore a wide range of theatrical performance techniques and styles of theatre. Pupils learn about stage movement and the use of voice both in improvised and scripted drama. Lessons encourage increased self and group awareness and the ability to appreciate and evaluate the work of others. The course seeks to develop creativity, self-confidence, self-discipline and communication skills.

The approach to Drama is essentially practical and in lessons pupils get up and physically experiment with acting texts and ways of creating small group improvised performances. Pupils also have the opportunity to develop skills in lighting, sound and costume, and may choose to specialise in these skills in coursework. Theatre visits are an integral part of the course, and the school is fortunate in the enormous range of theatre available locally.

Course content

As well as performances, there is an important written element, and pupils will acquire skills in writing about plays from a performance perspective. Pupils study one play in practical detail in preparation for the final exam.

Coursework

In the course of two years, pupils will work in small groups on a number of different performance projects. These may include performances of extracts from scripts, polished improvisations and Theatre in Education. While coursework is predominantly acting, pupils may choose to offer other skills, including costume, lighting and sound.

Pupils are assessed on both work in progress and final presentations. The best two project marks for each pupil over the course become their final coursework mark.

Written Exam

Candidates are required to answer two questions: one from Section A and one from either Section B or Section C

Section A: *Practical work completed during the course*

Questions focus on skills developed during practical projects.

Section B: *Study and performance of a scripted play*

Candidates answer questions about performance and design aspects of their chosen play.

Section C: *Live Theatre Productions*

Candidates answer questions about performance or staging aspects of productions they have seen during the course.

Assessment structure

Coursework 60%: Written Exam 40%.

School Productions

Pupils are encouraged to take part in school plays, both as actors and as members of the Theatre Crew who support all the school productions. Such work may form part of the coursework for final examination purposes.

Geography

Aims

Geography is quite simply about the world in which we live and on which we depend. Landscapes, people, places and the fragile environment are all interwoven. They are all understood through geographical analysis.

Course content

The specification followed is AQA Specification A (4032), which highlights the critical importance of geography for understanding the world and stimulating an interest in places. It aims to inspire students to become global citizens by exploring their place in the world, their values and responsibilities to other people and to the environment. Pupils are normally entered for the Higher Tier papers (available grades D to A*)

Unit 1 Physical Geography.

Section A The Restless Earth; Rocks, Resources and Scenery; Challenge of Weather and Climate; Living World

Section B Water on the Land; Ice on the Land; The Coastal Zone.

1 hour 30 minute examination. Answer 3 resources-based, short structured questions one from Section A and one from Section B plus free choice of one other.

Unit 2 Human Geography

Section A Population Change; Changing Urban Environments; Changing Rural Environments.

Section B The Development Gap; Globalisation; Tourism

1 hour 30 minute examination. Answer 3 resources-based, short structured questions one from Section A and one from Section B plus free choice of one other.

Unit 3 Local Fieldwork Investigation

There is no longer any coursework as part of the Geography GCSE. This has been replaced by a fieldwork enquiry which will investigate a geographical issue within the local area. The data collection will be carried out under the supervision of your teacher in the final term of Year 10 and the results will be collated in class. The write-up is in the form of a six hour **controlled assessment** which will be carried out under the direct supervision of your teacher in class time. The maximum word guidance for this is 2000.

Fieldwork

Optional residential field trips are organised for year 10 students (e.g. to Iceland or Italy).

Assessment structure

Unit 1	37.5%
Unit 2	37.5%
Unit 3	25%

History

Aims

History at GCSE is a way to sharpen the mind, to learn invaluable skills of analysis and to enrich the way we understand our present world. Everything we study in GCSE History comes from the 20th century and helps explain issues that are in the news today. Whatever history you have studied before, this is a course that has proved accessible and fun to do. We follow the specification of AQA History B 4045.

Course content

We study three main subjects at GCSE History

1. The USA 1919-41

Boom and bust in America between the wars – from prohibition and gangsters to Hollywood, the Wall Street Crash and the Great Depression.

2. Russia 1914-41

The coming of the Russian Revolution – the Tsar's disastrous last days, Lenin's rule, Stalin's takeover and the decade of transformation and terror he unleashed.

3. The Cold War 1945-91

Not a war but a period of fast-moving international events in which the USA and Russia very nearly blew up the world: the nuclear arms race, the space race, the Cuba missile crisis, Kennedy, Vietnam, Détente, Gorbachev and much more.

We take time off to study two smaller topics, each occupying us for a month or so:

4. The Troubles in Northern Ireland

A bloody historical puzzle that defeated the British for generations. We infiltrate the world of IRA and UDA, of bombings and hunger strikes, and try to make sense of the Irish struggles 1916-94.

5. Britain in the First and Second World War

Just what role did we play in the two World Wars? How did it change life in Britain? Was this our finest hour or a series of lucky escapes?

We write this final unit up as controlled coursework – together making a total of 2,000 words to be completed in 4 hours.

Assessment structure

There are two written papers, both one and three-quarters of an hour long and worth 37.5% of the marks. The two short coursework pieces make up the remaining 25%.

Information Communication Technology

The GCSE specification has changed for September 2010. At the time of writing we have been unable to confirm the exact specification that will be followed. The following outline, however, gives an indication of what will be covered.

Aims

The world is becoming increasingly dominated by the use of ICT systems, which influence every aspect of our everyday lives. The study of this GCSE will help provide pupils with the analytical, communication and technical skills that they will need as an active participant in this exciting and dynamic world. It is important that they have a lively and enquiring mind, an interest in information and communication technology, a willingness to explore new ideas and an ability to communicate their ideas effectively.

Course content - The course is made up of four modules.

Module 1

Pupils will develop their knowledge and understanding of computer systems, communications technology and information. Topics include; Hardware/Software, Input/Output devices, Communications, Data types / terminology and ICT legislation.

Module 2

Pupils will develop their practical skills and their understanding of a variety of ICT applications. Examples include Word Processing, DTP, Presentation, Graphic Manipulation, Spreadsheets and Databases.

Module 3

Pupils will further develop their knowledge and understanding of ICT applications, systems, networks and computer technology focussing on how ICT is used in industries such as Banking, Retailing and Manufacturing. Topics include; Networks, Software, Electronic Fraud and Online / Real time Processing.

Module 4

In the final module pupils will learn how to develop a system that will help solve a problem using a variety of ICT applications. The process the pupils will follow will include; Research and Analysis, Design, Development, Testing, Implementation, Documentation and Evaluation. An example of this would be to help the owner of a DVD rental shop to organise his/her business.

Assessment structure

Modules 2 and 4 are based on coursework while modules 1 and 3 are written examinations. There are two levels of entry for the examination papers: Foundation and Higher. All students would be entered for the higher tier.

Module 1 (20%) - This is assessed by a short written examination (1hr 15min).

Module 2 (30%) - Pupils will produce two minor coursework projects. The first is about presenting data and the second is chosen from handling data, modelling, measuring or control.

Module 3 (20%) – The third module is assessed by a short written examination (1hr 15min).

Module 4 (30%) – The final module is a major coursework project where pupils produce their own fully documented ICT system to tackle a real problem of your choice.

Music

Aims

The Music Course follows the EDEXCEL specification. The aims of the course are to give pupils of ALL musical abilities opportunities to:

1. Foster their musical sensitivity, creativity, and aural perceptions through the acquisition of knowledge, understanding, skills and the exercise of imagination.
2. Promote their cultural development and involvement in music as performers.
3. Support their personal and social development through creating and performing music with others.

Course content

The performance and composition coursework parts of the course are extremely adaptable to the needs of individuals and can be tailored to match their strengths. Expertise on an instrument is essential but even a modest grade standard can be enough to obtain a good final grade. No previous experience of Composing is required: compositions are notated using Sibelius software, an elementary understanding of musical notation is essential. The performing and composition coursework submitted is entirely the choice of the student, and can be work done at any point during the 2-year course. Furthermore, multiple attempts to record performance work are permitted.

In addition to Performance and Composition coursework, students study short pieces from the GCSE Anthology of Music, which is set out in the following Areas of Study:

1. Western Classical Music 1600 - 1899
2. 20th Century Music
3. Popular song in context
4. World Music

Assessment structure

Paper one	Solo performing and Ensemble performing	30%
Paper two	Compositions I and 2	30%
Paper three	Listening and appraising	40%
	Section A: Written listening paper	
	Section B: A question on a set work from the Anthology	

Prospective candidates should see the Director of Music and discuss the requirements of the course relevant to each individual.

English for Speakers of Other Languages: ESOL

Pupils entering Year 10 whose first language is not English are expected to have reached a level of English equivalent to a pass (Grade B) in the First Certificate of English (FCE) or a Band 5.0 in the Academic Module of the International English Language Testing Service (IELTS). This is at Lower Intermediate level and indicates a modest user.

ESOL is compulsory for some pupils whose English is weak, or for whom assessment shows additional support across the curriculum is needed. In these lessons, help is given in the academic English necessary for pupils to achieve their full potential at GCSE.

It is expected that all pupils at The Leys should be able to cope with English Language at GCSE level. Pupils for whom English is not their first language may be required to sit an alternative or an additional examination at an appropriate time during Year 10 or Year 11. All ESOL pupils follow a programme of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) along with their GCSEs. This is an excellent foundation for Sixth form life and study beyond school.

All ESOL pupils, regardless of achievement, sit an internal assessment during November or December in Year 11 to assess academic English skills needed for further study at AS and A level. Recommendations will be made to parents and pupils based on the outcome of these internal assessments.

Learning Support

It may be sensible for some pupils who are on the Learning Support Register not to take a full range of GCSEs. Discussions about this should be held with the Head of Learning Support during the choice process. In some cases pupils may start with a full range of subjects and later reduce their timetable in discussion with the LS department.