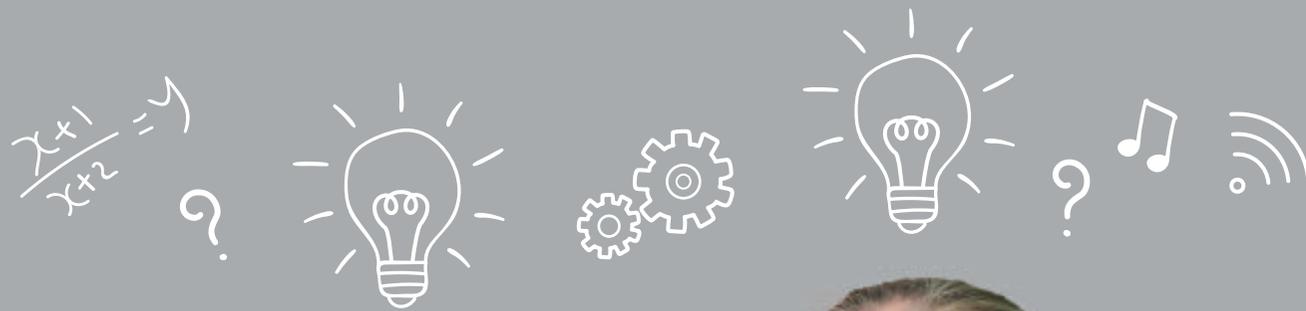


Welcome to the Inspiring World of Downsend.



GCSE Options Information Booklet



DOWNSEND
SCHOOL

Inspiring Young Minds

Part of the Cognita Schools Group

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Introduction

Welcome to Downsend School's options process. At Downsend, we aim to provide an outstanding, all round education and our Senior Years are the perfect platform for pupils to flourish and grow in self-esteem. We will offer you a wide range of options for Years 9, 10 and 11. We believe our options scheme is one of the most exciting and original available. It mirrors perfectly our intention to offer an appropriate curriculum for all pupils. In addition to a core curriculum based on literacy, numeracy and scientific understanding, the pupils can choose from a range of exciting and diverse subjects. This gives all our pupils the chance to do subjects that will most interest them in the upper part of the Senior School.

We will guide you in making the right options choices for you. All pupils will have a talk and receive a copy of the options booklet. There is an Options Evening where you will be able to attend with your parents to ask more questions about option subjects. In addition, take the time to talk to the teachers who run the various courses to make sure you are making the right choices. You should also attend Parents' Evening with your parents as you will be able to ask your teachers whether they think your choices are suitable for you.

When choosing subjects, think about you, your strengths and what paths you may want to take in your future career; don't base your choices on what your friends are doing or which teachers you like. Take advice from your parents and from your teachers – but at the end of the day, the decision must be yours. You are going to have to work hard at your options for the next three years. If you are unsure about any part of this process, please talk to your Form Tutor, Head of Year or the lead teacher of your subject choice.

The Options Process	
December 2020	Preliminary Options
February 2021	Year 8 Parent-Teacher Meetings
March 2021	Options Evening
March 29 2021	Final Options Due

Key Considerations



A Balanced Curriculum

It is a good idea to ensure that your choices are broad and balanced – even if you have a specific career in mind. You may change your mind over the next few years. Keeping your curriculum broad ensures that you keep as many doors as possible open. It also shows that you are a well-rounded person. Consider taking a subject that you really enjoy even if it isn't something that you think will be relevant to your career.

Dos and Don'ts for Students When Choosing subjects

- DO:**
- Take your time. Making hurried choices could mean making the wrong choices.
 - Think about which subjects you are good at.
 - Think about which subjects you enjoy. If you enjoy it, you are more likely to work hard and gain good grades.
- DON'T:**
- Worry about your choices. There is lots of advice on offer from your Form Tutor, Head of Year or subject teachers.
 - Choose a subject because your friends are choosing it. They may be more suited to a subject than you.
 - Choose a subject because you like the teacher. You may not get that teacher for your class.

Thinking Ahead

The choices you make now could affect the choices you can make in the future for 6th Form, University or career. You need to ensure that you keep as many

doors open as possible. This means that you need to think ahead: Some A Level choices will require certain GCSE grades. For example, 6th Forms may require a grade 5 or 6 in Maths to study A Level Maths. However, there are many subjects where you do not need to have studied the option at GCSE in order to study it for A Level e.g. Psychology.

Making the Wrong Choices

It is important that you think carefully about your options, as you are undertaking to study the subjects that you have chosen for 3 years. Every year, some students realise that they have chosen courses for the wrong reasons. Whilst we will try our best to accommodate requests for change, it can be difficult or impossible to change your choices once courses have started. Pupils are not permitted to drop subjects.

Learning Support

All pupils require learning support whether it be mainstream in lessons or in group/one-to-one sessions. Our options process has been designed to ensure that when support is needed, access will be there for those pupils. This will be carried out in a subtle and supportive way with the pupil's needs at the centre of everything we do.

New GCSE Style

In 2016, the Government introduced a programme of GCSE reform and all GCSEs offered at Downsend School follow this new format. Key features of the new GCSEs are:

New Grades	Old Grades
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5 (Strong Pass)	C
4 (Standard Pass)	
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

All GCSE exams will be studied in a linear format. There will be a greater emphasis on spelling, punctuation and grammar. All GCSE courses are now more rigorous, demanding and challenging. The grade scale for these new GCSEs now range from 9 to 1, with 9 being the highest.



The Full GCSE Offer at Downsend

The 6 core subjects

Studied by all pupils

4 'options' from a choice of 12

Chosen by you with our support

Downsend Enrichment

Tailor-made 'Stretch' Programme

Sport & Creative Arts

Opportunity to study further GCSE option



Part 1: The 'Core' Subjects

- English Language
- English Literature

- Mathematics

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics

Part 2: The 'Options'

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• French• German• Spanish
• Geography• History• Religious Studies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Art & Design: Fine Art• Art & Design: 3D Design• Computing• Drama• Music• Physical Education• Statistics |
|--|--|

Part 3: Enrichment and 'Non-Examined' Subjects

Tailor-made 'Stretch' Programme

Sport
Creative Arts
PSHE

Compulsory 'Core' Subjects

English Language
English Literature
Maths
Biology
Chemistry
Physics

English

Course Title

English Language

Exam Board

AQA

Course Content

The English Language course has been designed to inspire and motivate our students, providing fair stretch and challenge whilst ensuring that assessment and the texts studied are accessible to the full range of young people at Downsend.

The course enables students of all abilities to develop the skills they need to read, understand and analyse a wide range of different texts covering the 19th, 20th and 21st century time periods as well as to write clearly, coherently and accurately using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures.

Assessment

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

Section A: Reading

- one literature fiction text

Section B: Writing

- descriptive or narrative writing

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes • 50% of GCSE

Paper 2: Writers’ Viewpoints and Perspectives

Section A: Reading

- one non-fiction text
- one literary non-fiction text
(auto/biography – elements of fiction)

Section B: Writing

- writing to present a viewpoint

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes • 50% of GCSE

Post 16 Progression Routes

A strong command of our language underpins everything we undertake educationally, socially, emotionally and, of course, professionally within our working lives. The study of Language and Literature enriches our lives and leads us to new ideas and avenues of thought.

The links to future careers include journalism, writing, publishing, teaching, legal work, politics, public relations, advertising, acting, media, theatre, marketing and translating and interpreting work.

Mastery of both English Language and Literature provides a springboard any career possibility.

Suitable Candidates

English Language is fully co-teachable with GCSE English Literature.

The study of both subjects will require students to have a hard-working attitude in order to be successfully engaged with the subjects. They will need to have a strong desire to read literature outside the classroom, the preparedness to write at length with support and detail, and to think hard and independently about their response to any given text.

English

Course Title

English Literature

Exam Board

AQA

Course Content

The course has been put together to inspire, challenge and motivate every student, no matter what their level of ability, whilst supporting them within creative and engaging lessons.

The structure of assessment supports students' achievement in an accessible, closed book context through the use of extract-based questions in the assessment of a 19th-century novel, modern texts, themed poetry and a Shakespeare play.

Assessment

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel

Section A: Shakespeare

- one question on their play of choice

Section B: The 19th-century novel

- one question on their novel of choice

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes • 40% of GCSE

Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry

Section A: Modern texts

- one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text

Section B: Seen Poetry

- one comparative question on one named poem and another poem of choice from the studied poetry anthology

Section C: Unseen poetry

- one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem

Written exam: 2 hour 15 minutes • 60% of GCSE

Post 16 Progression Routes

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Maths

Course Title

Mathematics

Exam Board

Edexcel

Course Content

The Edexcel GCSE in Mathematics is a rigorous course which will provide you with problem solving skills, numeracy and spatial skills, a greater understanding of Mathematics and a far greater appreciation of Mathematics in the world around us.

The topics for Foundation and Higher Tiers are as follows:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, Proportion and Rates of Change
- Geometry
- Probability
- Statistics

Assessment

There will be three written papers, each contributing 33% of the marks towards the final grade, two papers are non-calculator and one is calculator.

There are two tiers of entry.

Foundation covers Grades 1-5 and Higher covers Grades 4-9.

Post 16 Progression Routes

As Galileo famously said "Mathematics is the Language of the Universe" and a GCSE in Mathematics will provide you with an opportunity to follow careers in Accountancy, Banking, Business, Engineering, Construction, IT and Teaching, to name just a few. Numbers, in whichever form they take are going to be around forever.

Suitable Candidates

Students will need a resilient nature, an attitude of not giving up when something is difficult. This will be very important to your success at this subject. Students will need a strong work ethic and a love of new challenges.

Science

Course Title

Biology

Exam Board

AQA

Course Content

1. Cell biology
2. Organisation
3. Infection and response
4. Bioenergetics
5. Homeostasis and response
6. Inheritance, variation and evolution
7. Ecology
8. Key Ideas – please see p76 of the AQA specification

Assessment

Paper 1: Topics 1-4

Cell biology; Organisation; Infection and response; and Bioenergetics.

Paper 2: Topics 5-7

Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, variation and evolution; and Ecology.

Each paper:

- A written exam for 1 hour 45 minutes
- Available in Foundation and Higher tiers
- Maximum of 100 marks
- Worth 50 % of their Biology GCSE

Post 16 Progression Routes

A Grade 6 or above achieved at GCSE will allow progression to an A Level in Biology.

A Grade 4 or above will allow progression to a Level 3 course in Health and Social Care, or Level 3 Diploma or the Extended Certificate in Applied Science.

Suitable Candidates

Biology is a compulsory subject, but to progress and achieve to the best of your ability, you need to be motivated, passionate to do well, willing to overcome challenges within the course, be engaged, be proactive, ask for assistance when you need it, participate as often as you can, and realise that there will be links with your skillset across the other Sciences, Mathematics and English.



Science

Course Title

Chemistry

Exam Board

AQA

Course Content

1. Atomic structure and the periodic table
2. Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
3. Quantitative chemistry
4. Chemical changes
5. Energy changes
6. The rate and extent of chemical change
7. Organic chemistry
8. Chemical analysis
9. Chemistry of the atmosphere
10. Using resources
11. Key Ideas – please see p83 of the AQA specification

Assessment

Paper 1: Topics 1-5

Atomic structure and the periodic table; Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry, Chemical changes; and Energy changes.

Paper 2: Topics 6-10

The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis, Chemistry of the atmosphere; and Using resources.

Each paper:

- A written exam for 1 hour 45 minutes
- Available in Foundation and Higher tiers
- Maximum of 100 marks
- Worth 50 % of their Chemistry GCSE

Post 16 Progression Routes

A Grade 6 or above achieved at GCSE will allow progression to an A Level in Chemistry.

A Grade 4 or above will allow progression to a Level 3 Diploma, or the Extended Certificate in Applied Science.

Suitable Candidates

Chemistry is a compulsory subject, but to progress and achieve to the best of your ability, you need to be motivated, passionate to do well, willing to overcome challenges within the course, be engaged, be proactive, ask for assistance when you need it, participate as often as you can, and realise that there will be links with your skillset across the other Sciences, Mathematics and English.

Science

Course Title

Physics

Exam Board

AQA

Course Content

1. Energy
2. Electricity
3. Particle model of matter
4. Atomic structure
5. Forces
6. Waves
7. Magnetism and electromagnetism
8. Space physics
9. Key Ideas – please see p74 of the AQA specification

Assessment

Paper 1: Topics 1-4

Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; and Atomic structure.

Paper 2: Topics 5-8

Forces; Waves; Magnetism and electromagnetism; and Space physics.

Each paper:

- A written exam for 1 hour 45 minutes
- Available in Foundation and Higher tiers
- Maximum of 100 marks
- Worth 50 % of their Physics GCSE

Post 16 Progression Routes

A Grade 6 or above achieved at GCSE will allow progression to an A Level in Physics.

A Grade 4 or above will allow progression to a Level 3 Diploma, or the Extended Certificate in Applied Science.

Suitable Candidates

Physics is a compulsory subject, but to progress and achieve to the best of your ability, you need to be motivated, passionate to do well, willing to overcome challenges within the course, be engaged, be proactive, ask for assistance when you need it, participate as often as you can, and realise that there will be links with your skillset across the other Sciences, Mathematics and English.

Optional Subjects

Art & Design: Fine Art

Art & Design: 3D Product Design

Computer Science

Drama

Geography

History

Languages: French/German/Spanish

Music

Physical Education

Religious Studies

Statistics

Art & Design (Fine Art)

Course Title

Art & Design: Fine Art

Exam Board

AQA

Course Content

This course focuses on developing skills in a variety of areas, including drawing, painting, printmaking and ceramics. All practical work is underpinned by critical and contextual studies and you will learn how to develop, refine and record ideas as well as how to present a personal response. This is an exciting and dynamic course which teaches you to innovate, take risks and problem solve, alongside strengthening analytical and critical thinking skills.

Assessment

The GCSE comprises of two components:

- Coursework is worth 60%. You will submit a portfolio of work at the end of the course which contains supporting studies and a variety of personal outcomes.
- Externally Set Assignment is worth 40%. You will research and develop your ideas in response to a set examination theme during the Spring Term of Year 11, culminating in a 10 hour practical exam.

In both components, you will be required to demonstrate evidence of all four assessment objectives:

- Develop Ideas
- Experiment and Refine
- Record Observations
- Respond

Post 16 Progression Routes

This course will equip you with the skills to continue your Art and Design studies with confidence at AS, A Level and beyond, opening the door to a variety of exciting careers. Pupils who may be interested in pursuing careers that require skills in critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, independence and innovation should consider taking Art and Design, alongside those pursuing the more traditional art routes of the fine arts, design, illustration, architecture and planning, curation, advertising, media and communications, film and the performing arts. The transferable skills you will gain from this subject will be invaluable and ones that employers and universities regard highly.

Suitable Candidates

This course would suit you if you have an enquiring mind and enjoy being creative. You will be prepared to take risks when exploring and experimenting with ideas, processes, materials and techniques to realise your creative intentions. The syllabus allows you to develop your practical skills and improve your analytical and critical thinking skills, as well as strengthen your understanding of how images and artefacts relate to their social, historical and cultural context.

Art & Design (3D Product Design)

Course Title

Art & Design: GCSE 3D Product Design

Exam Board

AQA

Course Content

3D Design is an exciting practically based course that enables students to explore a wide range of materials and processes to create 3 dimensional outcomes (products). These can be decorative or functional pieces and you will be encouraged to experiment and problem solve. Starting points may include nature, architectural and manmade structures and may also focus on shape, form, surface and texture. Investigating and analysing the work of historical and contemporary artists and designers. The first term is focussed on mini skills-based projects with a variety of outcomes.

You will be encouraged to become fully involved in the design process and to be open minded to manipulating new materials. You will explore the use of paper, card, wood, metal, plastics and wire.

Assessment

Component 1 (60%)

You will complete a portfolio of design work and 3D product as a response to a design brief. These products can be made from a range of materials and using various techniques and equipment in the workshop.

Component 2 (40%)

The exam board provide starting points for an externally set assignment in January of Year 11. You will research, prepare and design a product which you will make during a 10 hour practical examination.

There are four areas of assessments:

- Develop Ideas
- Refine
- Record Observations
- Respond

Post 16 Progression Routes

GCSE Product Design is an ideal platform for pupils wishing to pursue Design and Technology or Product Design at A Level which can lead to a wide variety of design based courses at university. It is particularly useful for those considering architecture, engineering, furniture, interior design, theatre design, industrial and product design. There is also a wide range of level 2/3 Art, Design and practical courses and apprenticeships available.

Suitable Candidates

GCSE 3D Product Design is suited to pupils who enjoy thinking creatively, imaginatively and independently; to those who wish to exercise problem-solving abilities and develop their practical skills further using a range of resistant and compliant materials. Pupils need to be prepared to take creative risks and explore a range of traditional and new technological materials and processes to realise their creative ideas.

Computer Science

Course Title

Computer Science

Exam Board

AQA

Course Content

The course centres around 9 important aspects related to already well-established principles of Computing, as well as more recent technological advances. The programme of study is broken down into the following strands:

1. Fundamentals of algorithms
2. Programming
3. Fundamentals of data representation
4. Computer Systems
5. Computer Networks
6. Cyber Security
7. Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology
8. Aspects of software development

Assessment

You will take two exams each counting towards 50% of the course. Each exam will be 1hr 30mins and contain 80 marks.

Paper 1: Based on subject content 1-4

A mix of multiple choice, short answer and longer answer questions assessing a student's practical problem solving and computational thinking skills.

Paper 2: Based on subject content 3-7

A mix of multiple choice, short answer, longer answer and extended response questions assessing a student's theoretical knowledge.

Programming skills will be assessed throughout the exams and you will not complete a separate programming project as part of your assessment.

Post 16 Progression Routes

This course would be ideal for those students wishing to study Computer Science at A Level and progress to a computing related degree at university. It is also a useful course for careers including ICT technician, software engineer, website developer and administrator.

Suitable Candidates

This course is suitable for those who are interested in how a computer works and not how to work a computer. You should have an interest in computer programming as these skills will be developed upon and will underpin the course. If you are good at problem solving and keen to develop your knowledge on computer systems and what makes them work, then this course is for you. You should have a good working knowledge of computers already, be comfortable with at least one programming language and ready to get to grips with the complex terminology used in Computer Science.

Drama

Course Title

Drama

Exam Board

AQA

Course Content

Most lessons will be practical Drama lessons or will have a practical element. We will cover the following areas:

Devising skills

- Over time, pupils will learn how to make improvisation and devising more successful and effective
- Skills include physicality, voice, use of performance space, research and more

Performing using scripts

- We will study at least one play in detail in preparation for the exam

How directors and performers interpret texts

- Includes genre, style, structure, character, language, atmosphere and more

How to talk and write about Drama

- Includes understanding theatre terminology, performance conventions and expected writing structure

Watching and writing about live theatre performances

- We will go on several theatre trips which can then be used to answer the exam question

Assessment

60% practical

- One short devised performance
This will be accompanied by a devising log in which candidates analyse and evaluate their own work
- Two short scripted performances

40% written exam

- One exam which tests candidates on their understanding of Drama, including a play text they have studied and a performance they have watched

Post 16 Progression Routes

A Level in Drama and Theatre. BTEC in Performing Arts. Post-18 choices include Drama Schools, BA degree courses in Drama and Theatre, and many training courses in different aspects of Drama.

Suitable Candidates

In order to succeed in this GCSE subject, you will need to enjoy and be committed to Drama. The practical assessments will require work outside of lessons, such as line-learning, rehearsing, planning etc. Most candidates will be pupils who enjoy performing, but there is the option to focus on technical or practical design skills instead. Having participated in school productions will be an advantage, but not compulsory. Creating an effective performance enhances problem-solving skills as well as organisation, leadership and confidence. You will develop insights into all aspects of life and improve your ability to communicate, in person and to large groups. The subject also helps pupils to show the diversity of their skills and have experiences no other subject can provide.

Geography

Course Title

Geography

Exam Board

AQA

Course Content

There are three main topic areas studied:

Living with the physical environment:

The challenge of natural hazards, The living world (the study of different ecosystems) and Physical landscapes in the UK

Challenges in the human environment:

Urban issues and challenges, The changing economic world, The challenge of resource management

Geographical applications:

Evaluation of a geographical issue, Fieldwork, Geographical skills e.g. map work

Assessment

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment

1 hour 30 minute • 35% of the GCSE course

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment

1 hour 30 minutes • 35% of the GCSE course

Paper 3: Geographical applications – based on pre-release material which is released 12 weeks before the exam

1 hour 15 minutes • 30% of the GCSE course

Post 16 Progression Routes

A Level Geography and leading to careers involving agriculture, environmental sciences, urban planning and geoscience to name but a few.

Suitable Candidates

Geography helps you to make sense of the world around you. Geography is not only current and relevant, it is one of the most exciting, adventurous and valuable subjects to study today. The course will give you the chance to get to grips with some of the big questions which affect our world and understand the social, economic and physical forces and processes which shape and change our world. It is very practical with opportunities to develop transferrable skills such as interpreting photographs, map skills, fieldwork skills, delivering presentations, role play and debating techniques which are transferrable to other subjects and will be of benefit to you in the world of employment.

History

Course Title

History

Exam Board

Edexcel

Course Content

1. Medicine in Britain, c1250 – present.
(assessed in paper 1 – Thematic study)
2. Early Elizabethan England, 1558-88.
(assessed in paper 2 – British Depth study)
3. Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91.
(assessed in paper 2 – Period Study)
4. Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39.
(assessed in paper 3 – Modern Depth Study)

Assessment

There are three papers:

Paper 1: Thematic study and historic environment.

The first three, questions 1 and 2 a and b assess the learning on the historic environment, this is section A. In section B you answer a further 3 questions with a choice between two of the largest essay questions.

This is a written examination • 1 hour 15 minutes

Paper 2: Period study and British depth study & Period Study.

In section A, you must answer three questions to assess knowledge and understanding on the British Depth Study. In section B, answer a single three-part question on the Period Study.

This is a written examination • 1 hour 45 minutes

Paper 3: Modern depth study.

The students answer 4 questions in total on the same issue. In section A, you answer one question based on a provided source. In section B, you answer a single four-part question based on historians' interpretations.

This is a written examination • 1 hour 20 minutes

Post 16 Progression Routes

Cambridge Pre U Diploma, IB or A Level History and then BA History Hons.

Suitable Candidates

To take this qualification it would be advantageous if you have a passion for History and a good general knowledge of Historical events. The ability to analyse sources, explain your opinion and develop your explanations would be beneficial too.

As a History student, you will have gained skills highly valued by employers, such as analytical and critical reasoning, oral and written communication and research skills. A History GCSE, A Level and degree is a good launch pad for a wide range of careers, including law, the public sector, business management and finance; as well as any role including specialist research, such as work in museums.

Languages (French/German/Spanish)

Course Title

GCSE French/German/Spanish

Exam Board

Edexcel

Course Content

The focus of the GCSE is on providing you with the ability to construct the Foreign Language for yourself, and therefore you will learn both the grammatical structures and the vocabulary to enable you to produce language either in writing or speaking and to understand the language that you read or hear. The contexts within which we will do this will be:

- Identity & Culture: Relationships and Interests; Everyday life and Cultural life
- Local area, holiday and travel
- School
- Future aspirations, study and work
- International and global dimension – talking about events, good causes and the environment

Through the course you will also learn about the culture of the Target language country and come across short extracts of literature e.g. poems and songs. You will also develop skills in translation.

Assessment

You will take four exams at the end of Year 11, all at either Foundation or Higher level, and each worth 25% of the course:

- Listening
- Speaking (conducted by your teacher)
- Reading
- Writing

Post 16 Progression Routes

Study of a language at GCSE could lead to AS/A2 level qualifications, as well as more vocational language courses. In an increasingly global market, the ability to communicate in a Foreign Language is a highly-prized skill in the world of work. Many courses at University now offer the opportunity to combine a language with another discipline, which could include the change to study or work abroad as part of the course.

Suitable Candidates

We live in an international society and languages are all around us. Studying a foreign language opens doors to opportunities that would otherwise not exist, whether that is travel, study or work. Learning a foreign language also provides a valuable insight into the way language is constructed and can often help students to improve their English skills!

Music

Course Title

GCSE Music

Exam Board

Eduqas

Course Content

Listening The four areas of study:

- Form and structure
- Film music
- Pop music
- Music for ensemble

Performing Two performances as an instrumentalist or vocalist

- **Performance 1:** Solo
- **Performance 2:** Ensemble

Composing Two compositions

- **Composition 1:** Composing to a stimulus set by the exam board
- **Composition 2:** Free composition

Assessment

Listening exam based on the four areas of study worth 40% of the mark

Coursework of compositions and performances each worth 30% of the total mark

Post 16 Progression Routes

On completion of this course you will be equipped with the knowledge, skills and understanding to progress onto an A Level Music course or Level 3 equivalent. You may choose to continue with Music by studying A Level BTEC music or Performing Arts. GCSE Music provides transferable skills which are relevant to many careers such as becoming a sound technician, community musician, music therapist, teacher, or private tutor, working in the music industry, in a concert hall or music venue, the arts/creative industries which might include work in film, TV, theatre, radio, arts administration, or creative education.

Suitable Candidates

To take GCSE Music you should be aiming to be grade 3 level on an instrument by the end of Year 10. You should have an awareness of music theory and be ready to work on reading music if you can't do that already. You need to be having lessons on at least one instrument and be able to play at least two instruments if your instrument is voice. You need to enjoy making music with others and be excited about having the opportunity to compose pieces in different styles. You should be interested in learning about and listening to lots of different styles of music. You will need to participate in at least two music groups in school.





Physical Education

Course Title

GCSE Physical Education

Exam Board

AQA

Course Content

Theory

- Applied anatomy and physiology.
- Movement analysis.
- Physical training.
- Sport psychology.
- Socio-cultural influences.
- Health fitness and wellbeing.
- Use of data.

Practical

- **Individual sports** – athletics, badminton, dance, gymnastics, rock climbing, swimming, table tennis, tennis, trampolining.
- **Team sports** – basketball, cricket, football, handball, hockey, netball, rugby, volleyball.

Please note: if you select a sport that can't be assessed in school it is essential that you are taking part regularly in this sport outside of school (extensive filmed footage will be required).

Assessment

- 70% of the course is theory based.
- 2 x exams – each worth 30% of the final mark.
- 1 x written analysis – worth 10% of the final mark.
- 3 x practical sports – (1 individual sport, 1 team sport and 1 additional sport from either list) each worth 10% of the final mark.

Post 16 Progression Routes

A Level in Physical Education/Sports Science, BTEC National Diploma in Sport & Exercise Science, JSLA/CSLA, access to any sporting qualification.

Suitable Candidates

To take this qualification you will need to enjoy your sport and PE and you will need to be motivated and organised. It is of vital importance when selecting GCSE PE that you have a genuine interest in playing sport and that you are engaged in sport both in and out of school. Attendance at the school sport practices is compulsory.

Selecting GCSE PE would be a really good choice if you are interested in a career working in the sporting industry and/or you would like to take PE and sport further after Downsend.

Religious Studies

Course Title

GCSE Religious Studies

Exam Board

AQA

Course Content

This will be a comparative study in Christianity and Islam within the following areas:

- Paper 1:**
- Beliefs
 - Practices
- Paper 2 (Themes):**
- Relationships and families
 - Religion and life
 - Religion, peace and conflict
 - Religion, crime and punishment

Assessment

2 x examinations – each worth 50% of the course.

Duration of each examination is 1 hour 45 minutes.

Paper 1: Beliefs and practices

Paper 2: Themes

Post 16 Progression Routes

A Level Religious Studies.

From here you could go on to explore Philosophy or Theology at degree level.

Suitable Candidates

To take this qualification it would be beneficial to have an interest in current affairs, locally, nationally and globally. Many contemporary issues are addressed, both in debating and written format.

As such, this GCSE would be a good choice if Ethics and Philosophy are of interest to the prospective candidate.

Statistics

Course Title

Statistics

Exam Board

Edexcel

Course Content

1. Collection of data
2. Processing and representing data
3. Summarising data
4. Scatter diagrams and correlation
5. Time Series
6. Probability
7. Index numbers
8. Probability distributions

Assessment

Candidates will take two papers in June both lasting 2 hours.

Post 16 Progression Routes

If you enjoy subjects that have a clear relevance to the working world you will find GCSE statistics very rewarding. The subject focuses on how statistics are used in the 'real world.' You will learn about the strengths and limitations of statistics in realistic scenarios and really develop your skills in critical thinking. We would expect our students to go on to study A Level Mathematics, opening up a wealth of career choices such as Medicine, Dentistry, ICT and Finance to name just a few.



Suitable Candidates

High achieving students who have a passion for Mathematics and a flair for the subject, beyond simply knowing. This subject will appeal to students who are considering taking an A Level in Mathematics.



Where to find help or ask a question

Contact Us	
English (Literature & Language)	Mr Duffield
Maths	Mrs Stack
Science (Biology, Chemistry & Physics)	Dr Kirby
Languages (French, Spanish & German)	Mr Skitt
Geography	Mrs Skitt
History	Mrs Skitt
Religious Studies	Mrs Skitt
Physical Education	Mr Lawrence
Music	Mrs Allison
Drama	Mr Bryant
Art & Design	Miss Aylen and/or Mrs Day
Computing	Mr Silva
Statistics	Mrs Stack



DOWNSEND **SCHOOL**

Inspiring Young Minds

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Little Downsend Epsom

6 Norman Avenue, Epsom, Surrey KT17 3AB

Little Downsend Leatherhead

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Downsend School

1 Leatherhead Road, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 8TJ

Admissions Enquiries

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