



E-ACT Ousedale
School

Be Kind | Work Hard | Succeed Together

E-ACT

OPENING MINDS,
OPENING DOORS



Olney Campus
Key Stage 4
Options Booklet
2026-28

Year 9 Options – FAQs

How to complete the form

- 1 **All** students must complete all of the 3 grey option sections.
- 2 For each option section, you select your 1st and 2nd choice. Do **NOT** just tick in the boxes as this does not show your preference.
- 3 You will only be allocated 1 subject per option section. We try to allocate 1st choice where possible, but if the subject is oversubscribed, will allocate your 2nd choice.
- 4 Do **NOT** put the same subject as your 1st choice in all the sections, as you can only take a subject once. You need to put a different subject as your 1st choice in all the sections so we can see what your preferences are.
- 5 All students **MUST** take Geography or History as a subject. So please allow for this within your choices.
- 6 All students take Core PE as a standard subject. This cannot be swapped for a different subject, due to how the lesson timetable is created.
- 7 ***All Students will start on the same Science pathway at the start of Year 10. They will be told if they will take Combined Science or Triple Science at the end of Year 10 after the completion of their end of year progress review. They will then follow either Triple Science or Combined Science during Year 11.***
- 8 Students must choose **BETWEEN** GCSE PE and OCR Sport Science – they cannot select both subjects.
- 9 Recommended Subjects – Art, Computer Science, Drama, Music and PE are all subjects that need to be agreed by the relevant department.
Art - Please contact your subject teacher if you want to take Art for them to approve your application.
Computer Science - Please contact your subject teacher if you want to take Computer Science for them to approve your application.
Drama - Please contact your subject teacher if you want to take Drama for them to approve your application.
Music - Please contact your subject teacher if you want to take Music for them to approve your application.
PE - Students will need to get their options sheet signed / approved by Mr Vanstone at Newport Pagnell campus and Miss Gorman or Mr Crofts at Olney.

Dear Students

In September 2026 you will be embarking on your Key Stage 4 Level 2 courses leading to GCSE and vocational qualifications. In Year 10 all students will study a compulsory core of:

- English Language/English Literature
- Mathematics/Statistics
- Science
- Physical Education
- History and/or Geography

Outside the core curriculum, we believe it is important that you continue to study a broad and balanced range of courses as this will give you access to a greater range of careers and subjects post -16. In addition, the following subjects are taught across the curriculum, in tutor time and on bespoke days.

- Computing
- Personal & Health Education
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural
- Careers
- Citizenship
- Enterprise

There are a number of people you can turn to for help and advice in the school:

- Form Tutor
- Subject teachers for advice on a specific subject
- Pastoral Academic Leader - Mr Crofts
- Senior Assistant Headteacher – Mr Phipps

At Ousedale School we fully advocate the 'right student on the right course' philosophy. In order to provide fully for all our students we offer a range of academic (GCSE) and vocational (OCR National/WJEC) courses. ALL OF THESE ARE **LEVEL 2** COURSES.

In addition, to help inform your decision making, the DfE have stated that students who secure good GCSE passes in English, Mathematics, the sciences (x2) including Computing, a modern foreign language, and a humanities subject (History or Geography) will achieve the English Baccalaureate (EB).

Completion of the EB is **not** part of the entry requirements for Ousedale 6th Form, however there are positive messages coming out of Higher Education institutions about the subjects included in the EB as facilitating subjects and therefore this may be a significant factor in your decision making.

The EBacc is made up of the subjects which are considered essential to many degrees and open up lots of doors.

Research shows that a pupil's socio-economic background impacts the subjects they choose at GCSE, and that this determines their opportunities beyond school.

A study by the UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects included in the EBacc provides students with greater opportunities in further education and increases the likelihood that a pupil will stay on in full-time education. Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can help improve a young person's performance in English and Maths.

We **encourage students who have a passion in a particular area of the curriculum to support their application with evidence**. This could take the form of a letter, photographs or a project that has been completed. We may also meet with students who choose these courses to ensure they will suit their learning style, interests and aspirations.

Courses described in this booklet will be available in September 2026, provided there is sufficient demand and a specialist teacher. If you choose a course which has to be cancelled, we will offer you alternatives. Where courses are over-subscribed, or staff feel you may benefit from a different route at Key Stage 4, you may have to accept another choice.

We are holding an Information Evening on **Thursday 22nd January 2026** for all parents and students **from 6.30pm until 8.30pm**. The evening starts with a talk about the options available, the process, and advice about the combinations of subjects to consider for future career plans. **The talk will take place at 6.30pm, in the Main Hall.**

We strongly advise all students and parents to attend the evening. Heads of Department will be present to give you information about their subject, advise you, and above all judge your enthusiasm and motivation to study their subject. A Careers Advisor will also be available to discuss any aspect of the option process in relation to future careers.

Completed option preference forms must be returned to **Form Tutors** by **Tuesday 24th February 2026**. Decisions will be made early in the summer term.

To help you make your decisions we have included a copy of the option preference form, that highlights the option blocks, in the back of this booklet.

What should you be thinking about when making your decision?

- ◆ Which subjects do you enjoy?
- ◆ Which subjects am I best at?
- ◆ What subjects will help my careers choice?
- ◆ Why am I making this choice?
- ◆ What do I really know about the course?
- ◆ How much coursework is involved in this course?
- ◆ What combination of subjects will give me greatest flexibility later?

Yours sincerely
Mr Whiting
Senior Deputy Headteacher

Student Guide to Courses

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English

QUALIFICATION: GCSE English Language
GCSE English Literature

EXAMINING BOARD: AQA

DIRECTOR OF ENGLISH: Mrs J Bazzone

Introduction to Course

Our students follow a unified course in English Language and English Literature over two years, which leads to the award of two separate qualifications. You will read and respond to a variety of literary and non-fiction texts and will continue to hone your skills in writing purposefully, imaginatively and accurately for a wide range of essay based and creative tasks. In lessons you will be given opportunities to work in pairs and in groups, as well as independently, and you will also develop your powers of speaking and listening effectively. We want you to be able to support your views with firm evidence from the texts as well as forming clear and interesting opinions about the writer's intentions, rooted in social, historical and cultural context. By drawing on wider knowledge, we hope that you will find studying English Language and Literature exciting and challenging - a firm preparation for further study and for life. As both GCSE courses will be assessed with 100% examination, there will be regular opportunities to re-visit the texts and skills studied throughout the two years.

Course Content

During the course you will:

- Read modern and pre-20th century novels, poems and a Shakespeare text.
- Respond to a range of fiction and non-fiction texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st Century.
- Write a range of fiction and non-fiction in a range of different styles and for different purposes.
- Complete a Spoken Language assessment.

Wider reading, in class and at home, is an essential feature of the course and one of the best ways for you to improve the standard of your creative work and develop and stronger argument in essay writing. The Spoken Language assessment (speaking and listening) is assessed as an additional endorsement to your GCSE qualifications.

Course Assessment

English Language Course	English Literature Course
100% Exam	100% Exam

Mathematics

QUALIFICATION:	GCSE Mathematics
EXAMINING BOARD:	AQA
DIRECTOR OF MATHEMATICS:	Mrs V Molnar-Smith
TEACHER IN CHARGE:	Ms N Wehden

Introduction to Course

All students follow a mathematics course covering number, algebra, geometry, measures and statistics. The mathematics course has an emphasis on problem-solving, functionality and mathematical thinking. There will be questions in the examinations on applying and using mathematics to solve problems, and some questions will be set in contexts that students should be expected to deal with in the real world. Students might be asked to answer questions on, for instance, decorating a room or designing a garden; or paying bills or sorting out rotas for shop staff.

Course Content

The syllabus covers:

- Working with numbers and the number system
- Fractions, decimals and percentages
- Ratio and proportion
- Expressions and equations
- Sequences and linear functions
- Solving problems with algebra
- Properties of angles and shapes
- Geometrical reasoning and calculation
- Measures and construction
- Mensuration
- Graphical methods
- The data handling cycle
- Data collection
- Data presentation and analysis
- Data interpretation
- Probability

This specification in mathematics should enable students to:

- develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
- acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions
- comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

students should be aware that mathematics can be used to develop models of real situations and that these models may be more or less effective depending on how the situation has been simplified and the assumptions that have been made. Students should also be able to recall, select and apply mathematical formulae.

Course Assessment

GCSE Mathematics has a Foundation tier (grades 1 – 5) and a Higher tier (grades 4 – 9). Students must take three question papers at the same tier. Students will be entered for the final examinations at Foundation or Higher level. Each exam is 1 hr 30 mins long and contributes 33⅓% to the final Mathematics GCSE assessment.

Each paper has a mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems.

The table shows the approximate weightings for each topic area for the overall tier of assessment.

Topic	Foundation %	Higher %
Number	25	15
Algebra	20	30
Ratio	25	20
Geometry	15	20
Probability and statistics combined	15	15

The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper.

All students should have a scientific calculator, protractor and compasses for use in lessons and in the examinations. Suitable calculators and geometry sets are on sale in the finance office. There is no controlled assessment for Mathematics GCSE.

QUALIFICATION: GCSE Statistics

EXAMINING BOARD: Edexcel

DIRECTOR OF MATHEMATICS: Mrs V Molnar-Smith

TEACHER IN CHARGE: Ms N Wehden

Introduction to Course

Students will also cover the content of Statistics GCSE in Maths lessons. An understanding of data in the real world and how it can be used (or misused) can empower students and is relevant to everyone. Additionally, the course can enable students to acquire transferable skills to support them in progressing beyond GCSE in a range of subjects.

Students will sit the examinations for GCSE Statistics at the end of Year 10.

Course Content

Students will learn how to collect and represent information and how to calculate summary statistics and probabilities. They will also interpret statistical information and results in context and reason statistically to draw conclusions. They will assess the appropriateness of different statistical methods and the conclusions drawn through the application of the statistical enquiry cycle.

Course Assessment

Students will be entered for the examinations at Foundation or Higher level. Statistics has a Foundation tier (grades 1 – 5) and a Higher tier (grades 4 – 9). Students must take two question papers at the same tier.

Each exam is 1 hr 30 mins long and contributes 50% to the final Statistics GCSE assessment.

The papers contain short, medium and extended response questions. Questions cover statistical methods, familiar and unfamiliar contexts and the component parts of the statistical enquiry cycle. Calculators may be used in both examinations. There is no controlled assessment for Statistics GCSE.

Physical Education (Core)

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mr R Vanstone

Introduction to Course

We encourage students to be actively involved in Core PE throughout Year 10 and 11; we feel it is a vital part of students' wellbeing for both their physical and mental health. We would encourage students who have opted for an examination in PE or Sport Science to still be involved in Core PE as it focuses on practical participation, movement and working with others.

The PE department at Ousedale value the importance of students being involved in the lessons as much as possible and if injured we still expect students to bring kit and get changed as per the PE policy, so we can adapt and engage them within the lesson to a suitable level.

We believe as a non-examined aspect of their curriculum it is a chance to enjoy a variety of activities, and hopefully a chance to de stress from the pressures of Year 10 and 11 in a supportive environment. We see this as natural extension from the work completed at lower school in Year 7-9.

Our main aim is to help students find a home in sport that hopefully they will continue to take part in when they leave Year 11. It is vital students participate in physical activity to remain healthy and active through this important time of their lives.

We try to structure the choice of sports or activities around two concepts; Healthy Active Lifestyle e.g. fitness, recreational activities and Competitive Sports e.g. games based focus on rules, tactics and leadership. We then try to structure the PE curriculum to suit the students within each group so they can access physical activities they enjoy doing.

A sample of activities which they may participate in are listed below:

Football / Rugby (Tag Rugby) / Badminton / Basketball / Hockey / Netball / Softball / Cricket / Rounder's / Handball / Fitness / Tennis / Squash / Dodgeball / Benchball / Athletics / Endzone games/ Circuits/ Aerobics/ Yoga/ Tchoukball/ Fitness.

Every Student needs to bring full PE kit to lessons as per the school policy and ensure they are safe and ready to take part.

Students will study each activity in depth over a half term block for Year 10 and Year 11. Many students will be able to use this time to further enhance GCSE PE practical grades and OCR Sport criteria. Students will have the opportunity to act in other roles in sport not just a performer such as a coach or an official at times.

The main aims of the PE Department within the framework are:

1. Students have the opportunity and choice to continue to enjoy physical activity both now and in the future through lifelong participation.
2. Students will benefit from a wide choice of activities but if they feel there is a particular activity they would like to participate in and then there are many extracurricular activities at lunchtime and after school and we can offer guidance on local clubs.
3. To provide after school, national and local fixtures against other schools in a wide variety of activities.
4. Encourage students to be independent and develop important social skills such as teamwork / leadership / coaching and being resourceful.

Science

Triple Science

QUALIFICATION:	GCSE - Biology GCSE - Chemistry GCSE - Physics
EXAMINING BOARD:	AQA

Trilogy Combined Science

QUALIFICATION:	Trilogy Combined Science
EXAMINING BOARD:	AQA
DIRECTOR OF SCIENCE:	Mr J Woodward

All Students will start on the same Science pathway at the start of Year 10. They will be told if they will take Combined Science or Triple Science at the end of Year 10 after the completion of their end of year progress review. They will then follow either Triple Science or Combined Science during Year 11.

Introduction to Course

In Science, students are expected to use their skills, knowledge and understanding to understand the uses and potential future uses of science in our society and to make informed judgements about social and ethical issues. They will define scientific problems and develop a sense of curiosity about scientific phenomena and acquire the ability to explain things rationally.

Students will take one of two routes available in Science, decided by the science department. They either follow the:

Triple separate science route leading to 3 separate GCSE grades in Biology, Chemistry and Physics on a 9 to 1 scale.

or

Combined science trilogy route studying all 3 sciences leading to 2 GCSEs on a 17 point scale from 9,9 and 9,8 at the top end to 2,1 and 1,1 for example at the lowest end.

Students will also have an opportunity to plan and conduct required practicals throughout the 2 year course and fully write up the experiments completed in their exercise books. Students will be assessed on these practicals within the exams at the end of year 11, with up to 15 marks per paper testing students on these and similar practicals.

Students will sit 2 papers per science each 1hr 45 minutes long and both equally weighted if taking triple science. If taking combined science students will complete 6 exams each lasting 1hr 15 minutes and each equally weighted.

Triple Science topics

Biology

Paper 1 covers topics 1-4 in common with the combined science topics listed below, but with extra content in most units.

Paper 2 covers topics 5-7 in common with the combined science topics listed below but with extra content in most units.

Chemistry

Paper 1 covers topics 1-5 in common with the combined science topics listed below, but with extra content in most units.

Paper 2 covers topics 6-10 listed below, in common with the combined science topics listed below with extra content in most units.

Physics

Paper 1 covers topics; 1,2,3 and 4 listed below, in common with the combined science topics listed below but with extra content in most units.

Paper 2 cover topics; 5,6 and 7 with extra content in most units in common with the combined science topics listed below and with an additional topic of space physics.

Trilogy Combined Science Topics

Biology

1. Cell biology; 2. Organisation; 3. Infection and response; 4. Bioenergetics; 5. Homeostasis and response; 6. Inheritance, variation and evolution; 7. Ecology

Chemistry

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 changes; 7. Organic chemistry; 8. Chemical analysis; 9. Chemistry of the atmosphere; 10. Using resources.

Physics

1. Energy. 2 Electricity. 3 Matter. 4. Atomic Structure. 5. Forces. 6. Waves. 7 Magnetism and Electromagnetism.

Art

QUALIFICATION: GCSE Art, Craft and Design

EXAMINING BOARD: AQA

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mrs R Nute

COURSE MANAGER: Mrs E Butler

Introduction to Course

We are looking for creative and independent learners with a passion for Art on this course. This is a challenging subject demanding open minds and positive, resilient attitudes. You will work on your ability to problem solve and communicate. By the end of the course you will have gained enhanced specialist knowledge and transferable personal skills.

The course is divided into two units:

Component One (60%)

Two projects.

1. Introduction project which focuses on understanding the assessment criteria in addition to workshops on specialist media.
2. Major project. Students will be given an open starting point from which they will create a personal project.

Component Two (40%)

Externally Set Assignment.

Students will choose a starting point from a selection provided by the exam board. Approx 12 weeks to explore the topic in their sketchbook. Concluding their investigation in one piece of work during a 10 hour invigilation period.

Course Assessment

- AO1. Developing ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
- AO2. Refining work through exploring ideas selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.
- AO3. Recording ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
- AO4. Presenting a personal, informed and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

All work is externally moderated.

Business

QUALIFICATION: GCSE Business

EXAMINING BOARD: Edexcel

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mr A Britton

Introduction to course

It doesn't matter if you haven't studied business prior to taking this course. You might have an interest in business or may want to start your own business one day. You might have an enquiring mind and be interested in learning about the world around you, how businesses are set up, and what it is that makes someone a great entrepreneur. This course will help you to understand all this and more.

The course is divided into two units:

Theme 1 – Investigating small business

Theme 1 concentrates on the key business concepts, issues and skills involved in starting and running a small business. It provides a framework for students to explore core concepts through the lens of an entrepreneur setting up a business.

Topics include:

- Enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Spotting a business opportunity
- Putting a business idea into practice
- Making the business effective
- Understanding external influences on business

Theme 2 – Building a business

Theme 2 examines how a business develops beyond the start-up phase. It focuses on the key business concepts, issues and decisions used to grow a business, with emphasis on aspects of marketing, operations, finance and human resources. Theme 2 also considers the impact of the wider world on the decisions a business makes as it grows.

Topics include:

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

Assessment

Theme 1	Externally assessed 90 minutes examination	50% of total marks
Theme 2	Externally assessed 90 minutes examination	50% of total marks

Both examinations will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions.

Computer Science

QUALIFICATION: GCSE Computer Science

EXAMINING BOARD: OCR

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mr M Willans

Introduction to Course

The Computer Science course has been designed to give students an in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. It's an excellent preparation for higher study and employment in the field of computer science. Students will develop their critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills, which can be transferred to other subjects.

Lessons will be split between learning the theory that needs to be covered for the exams and further developing the coding skills learnt during KS3 using Visual Basic. Students will be taught how to break a given problem down and develop an algorithm to solve it.

Paper 1 – Computer Systems (Written Exam: 1 hr 30mins – worth 50%)

This covers the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science. The areas covered are systems architecture; memory and storage; computer networks, connections and protocols; network security; systems software and ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology.

Paper 2 – Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming (Written Exam: 1 hr 30mins – worth 50%)

This area is focused on computational thinking and algorithms. Students will be tested on the elements of computational thinking and logic. They are principally assessed as to their ability to write, correct and improve algorithms. The areas covered are algorithms, programming fundamentals, producing robust programs, Boolean logic, programming languages and integrated development environments. In Section B of the exam, there will be questions assessing the student's ability to write or refine algorithms using the OCR Exam Reference Language or the high-level programming language they are familiar with.

Taking GCSE Computer Science is the best route on to taking Computer Science at A level in the 6th form. Students that enjoyed and did well at the Visual Basic, BBC Micro Emulator, Scratch and Python projects and have a good understanding of the Computer Science theory covered in KS3 should do very well in GCSE Computer Science. An excellent grasp of logic is also a key characteristic to succeed in this qualification.

Delivery

The practical work will comprise approximately 40% of the lesson time (the rest is theory).

Much of the theory content will be taught alongside the practical work, to support students in preparing for Paper 2. Some lessons will be purely theory and geared at the written exam papers.

Design and Technology

QUALIFICATION: GCSE Design and Technology

EXAMINING BOARD: AQA

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mrs R Nute

Introduction to Course

GCSE Design and Technology will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise.

It will allow students to study core technical, designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. They will also have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth.

Course Content

The GCSE Design and Technology specification sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills required to undertake the iterative design process of exploring, creating and evaluating. The subject content has been split into three sections as follows:

Core technical principles – This covers the core technical principles of the course that must be taught and includes areas such as; new and emerging technologies, energy generation and storage, developments in new materials, systems approach to designing, mechanical devices, materials and their working properties.

Specialist technical principles - Students will study at least one particular material category to a greater depth (e.g. textiles, woods, metals, polymers, papers & boards). This includes selection of materials or components, forces and stresses, ecological and social footprint, sources and origins, using and working with materials, stock forms, types and sizes, scales of production, specialist techniques and processes, surface treatments and finishes.

Designing and making principles - This includes areas such as investigation, primary and secondary data, environmental, social and economic challenge, the work of others, design strategies, communication of design ideas, prototype development, selection of materials and components, tolerances, material management, specialist tools and equipment, specialist techniques and processes.

Students must also demonstrate mathematical and scientific knowledge and understanding, in relation to design and technology. When undertaking the controlled assessment - 'design and make' section of the course - students will complete a prototype and a portfolio of evidence that will consist of work in the following areas:

- Identifying and investigating design possibilities
- Producing a design brief and specification
- Generating design ideas
- Developing design ideas
- Realising design ideas
- Analysing & evaluating

Course Assessment

The course is split in two:

- 50% non-exam assessment (NEA) of 30–35 hours approximate worth 100 marks
- 50% Written exam of 2 hours' worth 100 marks

Drama

QUALIFICATION:	GCSE Drama
EXAMINING BOARD:	EDEXCEL
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT:	Mr M Couldrick
COURSE MANAGER:	Mrs S Addison

Introduction to Course

The GCSE qualification focuses on creating performance work and the practical exploration of performance texts. The text that will be studied for examination will engage and inspire students and will be brought to life in lessons. GCSE Drama offers students the opportunity to gain practical and theoretical understanding of performance. Through the course, an appreciation of theatre and the development of self-expression, imagination and confidence will be encouraged. Students of all abilities will be provided with the opportunity to achieve success at GCSE level, and derive pleasure from and developing their own performance work. The course is hard work, both mentally and physically, but immensely enjoyable and rewarding.

Content will include the use of theatre in education work, convention performance work, devised performance work and duologues and monologues - all of which will be used to explore ideas, feelings and the culture around us. Much of this exploration will lead to a variety of performance work. Students are required to research individually and prepare a performance as a member of a group. Students can act or explore costume design, lighting design, set design or sound design. It is possible to specialise in just one of these areas. The class will visit the theatre to enjoy an entertaining show, allowing students to develop an appreciation and understanding of their own work in preparation for the written exam.

Drama will equip students with many essential life skills; the ability to communicate effectively with others and to work well as part of a team: vital factors in the 21st century job market.

Course Assessment

Component 1: Devising	Practical and coursework 40%	Create and develop a devised piece from stimulus Performance of this devised piece or design realisation for this performance Analyse and evaluate the devising process and performance Performance or design routes available Portfolio 1500 – 2000 words (45 marks) Devised performance/design realisation (15 marks)
Component 2: Performing from text	Practical 20%	Perform in or design for two key extracts from a performance text Performer or designer routes available Performance/design realisation of each key extract is worth 24 marks
Component 3: Theatre makers in practice	1hr 45 min Written examination 40%	Practical exploration and study of one complete performance text Choice of eight performance texts Live theatre evaluation – free choice of production

French

QUALIFICATION:	GCSE French
EXAMINING BOARD:	AQA
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT:	Mrs R McCormick (i.c Olney: Mrs A Couldrick)

Introduction to course

With developments in communication systems and transport making the world seem ever smaller, the ability to function in a second European language for both leisure and work is becoming ever more important. The English Baccalaureate requires students to achieve a pass (Grade 4) in 5 subjects: Maths, English, Science, a Humanity and a Language. At Ousedale a large number of students follow a GCSE course in French or Spanish.

Course Content and Assessment

Whichever language students study, they will be learning to use it in practical situations, concentrating on the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. At GCSE students are examined in all four at either Higher or Foundation level. Each skill is worth 25% of the final mark and students sit an exam in each at the end of Year 11.

The three themes covered on the course are **People and lifestyle**, **Popular culture** and **Communication and the world around us**. In the lessons students will practise all four skills using a mixture of textbook and department created resources as well as audio, video, and ICT resources.

Students will have the opportunity in Year 10 to participate in a 4 day residential trip to Nice in France.

Geography

QUALIFICATION: GCSE Geography

EXAMINING BOARD: AQA

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mrs E Laurence

Introduction to Course

Geography plays an increasingly important role in our ever changing world. Geographers investigate and explain the physical and human world around them and as this changes the role of geographers is to devise solutions to minimise any impacts. Studying Geography at GCSE will help you to make sense of natural events like earthquakes and hurricanes, it will develop your understanding of the physical and human factors involved in creating landscapes and enable you to grasp complex issues like international development and fragile environments. Geography is about the future and encourages flexible thinking and problem solving.

Geographers employ a very wide range of skills to investigate the world. Not only will you develop your literacy skills to a high level but also you will learn how to present and analyse a wide range of data such as tables, maps, images and graphs. Technology, including ICT and GIS, is an essential Geographical tool in the 21st century.

The GCSE Geography qualification requires students to undertake 2 fieldwork investigations.

Course Content and Assessment

Paper 1: Living in the physical environment (1 hour 30 minute exam, 35% of the course)

Topics: Challenge of Natural Hazard, Living World, Physical Landscapes of the UK (rivers and coasts)

Physical geography shapes the world in which we live. The landscapes around us have been carved over millions of years to become what they are today. This topic provides a fundamental understanding of physical concepts and processes and then explores the impact these can have on human activity and what we can do to manage them.

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment (1 hour 30 minute exam, 35% of the course)

Topics: Urban Issues and Challenges, The Challenge of Resource Management, Changing Economic World

It is difficult to find a place on Earth that is free from human impact. As the global population continues to grow challenges are created. These are wide ranging and include the availability of resources, the impact our activity has on the environment and global inequalities linked to wealth and health. This topic explores these challenges, considers how they change over time and space, and what we can do to reduce them.

Paper 3: Geographical Applications (1 hour 30 minute exam, 30% of the course)

Topics: Issue Evaluation, Fieldwork

This unit is designed to be synoptic in that students will be required to draw together knowledge, understanding and skills from the full course of study. It is an opportunity for students to show their breadth of understanding and an evaluative appreciation of the interrelationships between different geographical aspects.

GCSE Geography is a stepping stone to a whole range of courses and areas of employment, including; environmental studies, geology, town planning, geosciences, meteorology, disaster management, oil exploration, feeding the world's people, crime analysis, epidemiology, international development, social anthropology, green energy technologies, climate science.

OCR Cambridge National - Health and Social Care

QUALIFICATION: Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Health & Social Care

EXAMINING BOARD: OCR

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mrs H Barnes

Introduction to Course

The OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Health and Social Care will give students the opportunity to gain a broad understanding and knowledge of the Health and Social Care sector and allow them the opportunity to develop a range of personal skills and techniques that are essential for successful performance in working life. It presents knowledge, skills and understanding in a meaningful work-related context, to allow students to understand theory and application. Skills students will acquire through the course include:

- Interpersonal skills: knowledge and understanding of skills involved in effective communication.
- Counselling skills: caring for the young and elderly, supporting and protecting vulnerable people.
- Presentation skills: how to produce a report; care plan; oral presentation.
- Cognitive skills: analyse different perspectives on Health and Social Care and the effect these influences have.

More information can be found at www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals

Course Content

The qualification has three components that focus on the assessment of knowledge, skills and practices. These are all essential to developing a basis for progression and therefore students need to demonstrate attainment across all components to achieve the qualification.

There is one external assessment.

Unit 1 Principles of care in health and social care settings.

The exam focuses on 3 specific areas the rights of service users in health and social care settings, Person-centred values and effective communication in health and social care settings. The exam requires students to demonstrate that they can identify and effectively use an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories and knowledge to answer the questions. Assessment – External Exam (40%)

Units 2 Supporting individuals through life events

In this unit you will learn about life stages and the factors that affect them. You will understand expected and unexpected life events and the impact they will have on physical, social/emotional and socio-economic aspects in an individual's life.

Assessment – OCR Set Assignment (30%)

Unit 3 Creative and therapeutic activities

In this unit you will learn about a range of creative activities and therapies that are available in health and social care settings and understand the physical, intellectual, emotional and social benefits of these. You will learn how to plan and deliver a creative activity with an individual or group and evaluate your planning and delivery.

Assessment – OCR Set Assignment (30%)

All units are mandatory and must be completed to achieve the qualification.

History

QUALIFICATION: GCSE History

EXAMINING BOARD: AQA

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mrs S Whiting

Introduction to Course

The GCSE course has a focus on modern world history along with the development of Britain as a nation. You will not just learn what happened but also how to study the past by using documents, cartoons, diaries, maps, films and propaganda. There will also be a study of an historical site. You will learn how to make and support your own judgements. History will help you to develop skills in reading, writing, analysing information and thinking - all these help prepare you for the world of work, or further study.

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world (One exam paper- 50% of the course)

Section A: Period study

Germany, 1890–1945: Democracy and dictatorship

This period study focuses on the development of Germany during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of democracy and dictatorship – the development and collapse of democracy and the rise and fall of Nazism. Students will study the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of these two developments and the role ideas played in influencing change. They will also look at the role of key individuals and groups in shaping change and the impact the developments had on them.

Section B: Wider world depth studies

Conflict and tension in Asia, 1950–1975

This wider world depth study enables students to understand the complex and diverse interests of different states and individuals and the ideologies they represented. It considers the role of nationalist movements in causing and sustaining conflict. It focuses on the causes and events of the Cold War in Asia and seeks to show how and why conflict occurred and why it proved difficult to resolve the tensions which arose. This study also considers the role of key individuals and groups in shaping change, as well as how they were affected by and influenced international relations.

Paper 2: Shaping the nation (One Exam paper- 50% of the course)

Section A: Thematic studies

Britain: Power and the people: c1170 to the present day

This thematic study will enable students to gain an understanding of the development of the relationship between the citizen and the state in Britain over a long period of time. It considers the causes, scale, nature and consequences of protest to that relationship. By charting the journey from feudalism and serfdom to democracy and equality, it reveals how, in different periods, the state responds to challenges to its authority and their impact. It allows students to construct an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of the citizen.

Section B: British depth studies including the historic environment

Elizabethan England, c1568–1603

This option allows students to study in depth a specified period, the last 35 years of Elizabeth I's reign. The study will focus on major events of Elizabeth I's reign considered from economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoints, and arising contemporary and historical controversies.

Hospitality & Catering

QUALIFICATION: Level 1/Level 2 Vocational Award in Hospitality and Catering

EXAMINING BOARD: WJEC

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mrs R Nute

Introduction to Course

This is a vocational qualification which teaches students about the hospitality and catering industry through a combination of practical experience and written assignments. The qualification provides learners with the knowledge, skills and understanding needed for a career in the sector. They will learn how to plan healthy, nutritious meals catering for individual needs. They will also practice a range of practical skills used in the preparation of high-quality food and drinks in the industry, and prepare and serve food safely and hygienically.

Course Assessment

Unit Number	Title	Assessment
1	The Hospitality and Catering Industry	External Assessment (40%)
2	Hospitality and Catering in Action	Internal Assessment (60%)

What skills do students need?

- The ability to prepare food and demonstrate creativity
- The motivation to work independently and as part of a team
- The motivation to complete extended practical tasks

Students are required to organise and prepare food ingredients each week so that they can develop the practical skills required for both the exam and coursework elements of the qualification.

The course prepares students who may wish to pursue a career in Hospitality and Catering and it is a qualification highly regarded within the industry. Career opportunities include restaurant management and chef work. There are also career opportunities in licensed retailing, management, promotions and event management. Hotels offer management, event organisation, restaurant and bar work and a whole range of operational roles, including finance, human resources and marketing. See www.prospects.ac.uk for more information.

Music

QUALIFICATION:	GCSE Music
EXAMINING BOARD:	AQA
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT:	Mr M Couldrick

Introduction to Course

The course provides for a wide range of musical abilities and interests and allows the students freedom of expression through a variety of styles of music. You do not have to be an established musician to take the course. The aims of the course are to develop skills, knowledge and understanding in performing, listening and composing; to improve aural perception, and musical sensitivity, to promote students' cultural development through the study of a wide range of music from around the world; to develop students' musical awareness through creating and performing with others.

Course Content and Assessment

Component 1: Understanding Music 40%

In this unit the listening skills of students will be assessed, alongside their contextual understanding of music. Students will sit an end of course examination paper in which they will listen to unfamiliar music from four areas of study. Students will identify and describe musical elements, musical context and use musical language (including reading music).

There are four areas of study:

1. Western classical tradition 1650 – 1910
2. Popular music
3. Traditional music
4. Western classical tradition since 1910

Component 2: Performing Music 30%

Students will need to prepare a solo performance and an ensemble performance. The overall performance time must be at least four minutes, of which the ensemble performance must be a minimum of one minute.

Component 3: Composing Music 30%

Students will need to prepare two music compositions. One of the compositions will be to a brief, and the second composition will be a free composition. The combined duration of the compositions must be a minimum of three minutes.

Students will be expected to contribute to music department concerts/events and extracurricular music making as part of their learning over the course.

Physical Education

QUALIFICATION: GCSE Physical Education

EXAMINING BOARD: OCR

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mr R Vanstone

Introduction to Course

This is a stimulating, but demanding course covering many interesting areas of Physical Education through both theoretical and practical approaches. In Years 10 and 11 you will have a mixture of practical and theory lessons that will look at what happens to our bodies when we exercise and how this can impact on individuals following a healthy and active lifestyle. This subject relates well to other GCSEs in Science and Social Science. This could lead to careers in sport and recreation management, physiotherapy, radiography, teaching, the leisure industry, sports science and professional sport.

Course Content

The theoretical part of the course is divided into three mandatory units:

1. Applied anatomy and physiology, Physical training (Theory)
2. Socio-cultural influences, Sports psychology, Health, fitness and wellbeing (Theory)
3. Practical activity assessment, Evaluating and Analysing Performance (Practical/Coursework)

Practical Activities

Students will participate in a variety of sports. These will be dependent on the strengths of each pupil and the space/ facilities available. They will be assessed by their teachers, but these marks will later be moderated by an external examiner. Students can also improve their marks in Core PE lessons. All coursework is completed prior to the February half term of year 11. They will get a mark out of 20 for each activity they participate in.

Students can also use activities that are not available at the school; these include equestrian, golf and skiing. Please see the full list of activities at the end of this section of the booklet. This must be supported by video evidence collected by the student, so that teachers and moderators can accurately mark the performance, we recommend when a student is coached or holds any certification they use this to help provide further evidence. They must use their top three marks across the two approved activity lists to get their overall practical score; this will include the one piece of coursework. **It is vital that students are regularly participating in the approved sports that they are submitting. Ideally participating in these activities in clubs outside of lesson hours as they have to keep a log of competitive participation for all assessment.**

Students will need to get their options sheet signed / approved by Miss Gorman or Mr Croft to say they are happy for them to take Sport Studies as a GCSE option. The students ATL in KS3 PE lessons and level of participation in sport outside of school will be considered.

Students will complete a written analysis and evaluation of their own or other's performances in one chosen practical activity and suggest ways in which improvement could be achieved.

Students must use the performance of **three** activities taken from the two approved lists:

- **One** from the 'individual' list.
- **One** from the 'team' list.
- **One** other from either list.

All practical activities include:

1. Range and quality of skills
2. Physical attributes
3. Decision making

Course Assessment

Applied anatomy and physiology, Physical training: 30% of the total GCSE marks from an external assessment. This is in the form of a 1 hour written paper worth 60 marks taken at the end of year 11.

Socio-cultural influences, Sports psychology, Health, fitness and wellbeing: 30% of the total GCSE marks from an external assessment. This is in the form of a 1 hour written paper worth 60 marks taken at the end of year 11.

Practical activity assessment, Evaluating and Analysing Performance: this unit will be assessed through the three different practical scores the students achieve over the course from the two approved lists mentioned previously. The coursework – Evaluating and Analysing Performance will be undertaken in year 11. The total for these two units is 40% of the overall GCSE grade. Each of the 4 components in this area are marked out of 20.

More information can be found at www.ocr.org.uk.

Please note: Students must choose **BETWEEN** GCSE PE and OCR Sport Science – they cannot select both subjects.

GCSE PE Activities List from 2026

Team Activity	Comments	Individual Activity	Comments
Acrobatic gymnastics	Cannot be assessed with gymnastics	Amateur boxing	
Association football	Cannot be five-a-side. Cannot be assessed with futsal	Athletics	
Badminton	Cannot be assessed with singles	Badminton	Cannot be assessed with doubles
Basketball	Cannot be street basketball	Canoeing	Cannot be assessed with kayaking, rowing or sculling
Camogie	Cannot be assessed with hurling	Cycling	Track, road or BMX cycling (racing, not tricks) only
Cricket		Dance	This can only be used for one activity
Dance	This can only be used for one activity	Diving	Platform diving
Figure Skating	This can only be used for one activity. Cannot be assessed with Dance	Equestrian	
Futsal	Cannot be assessed with football	Figure skating	This can only be used for one activity. Cannot be assessed with dance
Gaelic football		Golf	
Handball		Gymnastics	Floor routines and apparatus only
Hockey	Must be field hockey	Kayaking	Cannot be assessed with canoeing, rowing or sculling
Hurling	Cannot be assessed with camogie	Rock climbing	Can be indoor or outdoor
Ice hockey	Cannot be assessed with inline roller hockey	Sailing	Royal Yachting Association recognised sailing boat classes only. The list can be found online at: https://www.rya.org.uk/racing/youth-junior/info/pages/recognised-classes.aspx . This can only be used for 1 activity.
Inline roller hockey	Cannot be assessed with ice hockey	Sculling	Cannot be assessed with rowing, canoeing or kayaking. Cannot be assessed with team sculling
Lacrosse		Skiing	Outdoor/indoor on snow, cannot be assessed with snowboarding. Must not be on dry slopes
Netball		Snowboarding	Outdoor/indoor on snow. Must not be on dry slopes
Rowing	Cannot be assessed with sculling, canoeing or kayaking	Squash	Cannot be assessed with doubles
Rugby league	Cannot be assessed with rugby union (sevens or fifteen a side). Cannot be tag rugby	Swimming	Not synchronised swimming, personal survival or lifesaving
Rugby union	Can be assessed as sevens or fifteen a side. Cannot be assessed with rugby league. Cannot be tag rugby. This can only be used for one activity.	Table Tennis	Cannot be assessed with doubles
Sailing	Royal Yachting Association recognised sailing boat classes only. The list can be found online at: https://www.rya.org.uk/racing/youth-junior/info/pages/recognised-classes.aspx . This can only be used for 1 activity.	Tennis	Cannot be assessed with doubles
Sculling	Cannot be assessed with rowing, canoeing or kayaking. Cannot be assessed with individual sculling	Trampolineing	
Squash	Cannot be assessed with singles	Windsurfing	
Table tennis	Cannot be assessed with singles	Specialist Activity	
Tennis	Cannot be assessed with singles	Boccia	
Volleyball		Polybat	
Water polo			
Specialist Activity			
Blind Cricket			
Goal ball			
Powerchair football			
Table cricket			
Wheelchair basketball			
Wheelchair rugby			

Religious Studies

QUALIFICATION: GCSE Religious Studies

EXAMINING BOARD: AQA

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mrs S Whiting

Introduction to Course

Students will be challenged with questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth, enabling them to develop their own attitudes towards religious issues.

Students will also gain an appreciation of how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of our culture. They will develop analytical and critical thinking skills, the ability to work with abstract ideas, leadership and research skills. All these skills will help prepare them for further study.

Course Content:

Component 1: The Study of religion – beliefs, teachings and practices

Students will study Christianity and Islam. They will study the beliefs, teachings and practices of both religions. Students will study the influence of the beliefs, teachings and practices studied on individuals, communities, and societies.

Component 2: Thematic studies

Students will study 4 of the following themes:

- Relationships and families.
- Religion and life.
- The existence of God and revelation.
- Religion, peace and conflict.
- Religion, crime and punishment.
- Religion, human rights and social justice.

Students will be aware of different religious perspectives on the issues studied within and / or between religious and non-religious beliefs such as atheism and humanism. Students will also study religious, philosophical and ethical arguments related to the issues raised, and their impact and influence on the modern world.

Assessment:

Component 1 = Exam = 50%

Component 2 = Exam = 50%

Spanish

QUALIFICATION:	GCSE Spanish
EXAMINING BOARD:	AQA
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT:	Mrs R McCormick (i.c Olney: Mrs A Couldrick)

Introduction to course

With developments in communication systems and transport making the world seem ever smaller, the ability to function in a second European language for both leisure and work is becoming ever more important. The English Baccalaureate requires students to achieve a pass (Grade 4) in 5 subjects: Maths, English, Science, a Humanity and a Language. At Ousedale a large number of students follow a GCSE course in French or Spanish.

Course Content and Assessment

Students will be learning to use Spanish in practical situations, concentrating on the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. At GCSE students are examined in all four at either Higher or Foundation level. Each skill is worth 25% of the final mark and students sit an exam in each at the end of Year 11.

The three themes covered on the course are **People and lifestyle**, **Popular culture** and **Communication and the world around us**. In the lessons students will practise all four skills using a mixture of textbook and department created resources as well as audio, video, and ICT resources.

OCR Cambridge National – Sport Science

QUALIFICATION: Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Sport Science

EXAMINING BOARD: OCR

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mr R Vanstone

Introduction to the course

The objectives of this qualification are to help the students understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Sport Science. Students will cover a range of topics including, nutrition, technology in performance, injuries & medical conditions affecting the human body and learn how to conduct fitness tests and how to design, implement and evaluate fitness training programmes. All elements of the OCR Sport Science course aim to develop learning and practical skills that can be applied to real-life contexts and work situations. This course is assessed with both external exam (40%) and externally moderated written assignments (60%). More information can be found at www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals

Course Content

Unit 1 Reducing the risk of sports injuries and dealing with common medical conditions

By completing this unit you will prepare as a participant to take part in physical activity in a way which minimises the risk of injuries occurring. It will also prepare you to know how to react to common injuries that can occur during sport and physical activity, and how to recognise the symptoms of some common medical conditions.

Assessment – External Exam (40%)

Unit 2 Applying the principles of training: fitness and how it affects skill performance

By completing this unit, you will conduct a range of fitness tests, understand what they test and their advantages and disadvantages. You will also learn how to design, plan and evaluate a fitness training programme. You will then interpret the data collected from these fitness tests and learn how best to feed this back.

Assessment – OCR Set Assignment (40%)

Unit 3 The body's response to physical activity and how technology informs this

By completing this unit you will gain understanding of how both the cardio-respiratory and musculoskeletal systems provide you with the energy and movements needed to keep you exercising and in turn how exercise helps develop both systems. You will also learn about relevant technology and how this assists us in measuring changes in these systems.

Assessment – OCR Set Assignment (20%)

All units are mandatory and must be completed to achieve the qualification.

Please note: Students must choose **BETWEEN** GCSE PE and OCR Sport Science – they cannot select both subjects.

Olney Campus KS4 Preference Form 2026-2028

Name:

Form:

Core Subjects: English, Maths, Science and Core PE

You must choose History **and/or** Geography

Please note: Courses will not run if there is insufficient demand

OPTION 1 (Please rank 1 - 2)	OPTION 2 (Please rank 1 - 2)	OPTION 3 (Please rank 1 - 2)	
French	History	French	
Geography	Spanish	Geography	
History	Art Recommended.....	Business (Staffing Dependent)	
Spanish	Computer Science/IT (Staffing Dependent) Recommended.....	Design Technology	
Subjects in bold make up the English Baccalaureate. Along with English, Maths and Science, students should pick History and/or Geography and a language to qualify	Drama Recommended.....	Music Recommended.....	
	Physical Education Recommended.....	Religious Studies	
	Religious Studies	OCR Health & Social Care	
	WJEC Hospitality & Catering	OCR Sports Science	
	Students must choose BETWEEN GCSE PE and OCR Sport Science – they cannot select both subjects		

ALL students must choose Geography and/or History as part of their options

Note that criteria for entry onto courses such as PE/Music/Art/Drama will be advertised in the options booklet

Completing this form **does not** guarantee you a place on a particular course. We will interview those students who we feel need additional guidance on choosing their final options.

Staff Signature/Comment:.....

Parent/Carer Signature: