

KS3 Year 9 Choices 2026



PREPARE



ASPIRE



SUCCEED

Introduction

A robust, broad and rigorous core curriculum, enriched with additional personalisation, leading to well-rounded, resilient and confident young people.

Our curriculum offer is closely aligned with the school's mission statement and vision of **Prepare, Aspire, Succeed**; supporting the 'Cottesloe Journey' that combines learning about and from the world we live in, where students experience a sense of fulfilment through educational and personal achievement.

What is the KS3 Year 9 Choices process?

In Year 8, students are offered a number of choices for their Year 9 Programme of Study, alongside a suite of core subjects. Year 8 students are able to make three choices about their learning in Year 9 from a range of subjects within the Creative Arts, Technology, and an Enrichment choice such as Business Studies. Although Year 8 students make these choices about their learning in Year 9, Year 9 is part of KS3 rather than KS4. This means that whilst these choices will influence decisions for KS4, there is still some opportunity to make changes, prior to choosing GCSE options in Year 9.

This process has two key aims:

- To enable students to begin to specialise in some areas of the curriculum that they particularly enjoy, or are particularly successful in.
- To provide a 'practice run' at the GCSE options process. The Options process takes place midway through Year 9.

We believe the KS3 Year 9 choices process is a key point in a student's secondary education. The process allows students to begin to take ownership of their learning. We are also aware that not every student will get things right first time around; therefore students who feel they have made a mistake, or who change their mind as they move through into Year 9 will be supported to transfer their choices to more appropriate subjects. We are all allowed to make mistakes!

We believe that Key Stage 3 is a crucial stage in a student's education; it provides an opportunity to develop deep and powerful knowledge in a wide range of subject areas which, in many cases, will not have been studied as discrete subjects at primary school. Cutting KS3 short can stifle these opportunities and the love of learning new things.

Our Key Stage 3 programmes of study are designed to develop a rich and diverse knowledge base from which to form coherent viewpoints and arguments, and to develop understanding of ever-more complex subject matter; to provide opportunities to experience cultural, educational and sporting experiences both inside the classroom and beyond; and to develop a love of learning which will become embedded into our students' approaches to education at Key Stage 4 and beyond. Ultimately, we want students to progress on from Key Stage 3 with self-confidence, excited about their own education, and having developed resilience, independence, and great aspiration for the future.



Louise Baldwin
Head of School

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5 BUSINESS

6 DANCE

7 DESIGN TECHNOLOGY | Product Design

8 DESIGN TECHNOLOGY | Food technology

9 DRAMA

10 MUSIC

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12 RELIGIOUS STUDIES | Society and Religion

13 [Link to online choices form and deadline date](#)

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Education | The Year 9 course provides progression from Key Stage 3, and a strong foundation for further progression to GCSE Fine Art.

Course Details | In Year 9 students will explore a range of two and/or three dimensional media, techniques and processes. Focus will be on experimenting with media and techniques and developing confidence in using new processes and techniques. The importance of drawing and annotation will be introduced as a crucial part of GCSE Art.

They will explore images, artefacts and resources from the past and recent times, including European and non-European examples. Responses to these examples will be shown through practical and critical activities which will demonstrate students' growing understanding of different styles, genres and traditions.

The course allows imagination and innovation to flourish while providing a solid grounding towards GCSE.

Assessment

All work in Year 9 is assessed against four assessment objectives:

AO1 | Developing ideas through the study of art and artists

AO2 | Refining ideas through experimentation and selection of media, techniques and processes.

AO3 | Recording relevant ideas and observations

AO4 | Presenting a personal, informed and meaningful response.

Evidence of developing skills towards the four objectives must be present in Year 9 work, and subsequently must be evident in all units of work in Year 10 and 11:

- Students are introduced to the GCSE Assessment Criteria in preparation for working on their Portfolio Coursework.
- Assessment is provided by frequent verbal feedback, self /peer assessment, target setting and data collection throughout the year.
- An end of year Assessment is completed in the Summer Term.
- Summer Independent Learning will prepare students for their first GCSE Portfolio project

Equipment required | It is expected that all students will use school sketchbooks in which to develop coursework in lessons and at home. It is also advisable to purchase a plastic portfolio to keep work safe when transporting between school and home.

Art kit

- Good quality drawing media (a range of B pencils, black biro, fine liner)
- Good quality painting media (a range of brushes, watercolour set, acrylics)
- A personal range of media is essential as a substantial amount of work needs to be done at home. Art kits, sketchbooks and separate items can be purchased from the School Shop.

Careers | Creativity, imagination and the ability to analyse and interpret visual imagery are qualities that are required in many areas of society. Career opportunities are extensive and include: advertising, fashion design, stage design, film and television work, interior design, graphic design, architecture. Fine Artist, Printmaker, Fashion Designer, Textile Artist, 3D Designer, Graphic Designer, Photographer. The choice of possible careers is huge and ever growing within the creative industries. Students can use this subject to specialise in a future career, but most will use the course to support their broad base of learning, general knowledge and skill development.

Education | In Year 9 you will complete knowledge and skills based projects, designed to give you a wide range of skills and understanding to enable you to fully engage with the GCSE in Year 10. You could go on to take A Level Business and/or A Level Economics.

Course Details | The Year 9 course will comprise of 5 topics and a project activity in the last half of the summer term. These topics are:-

- Entrepreneur's and Enterprise
- Environmentalism & Sustainability
- Fast Fashion
- Globalisation
- Poverty
- Business activity

Assessment

Learning will be assessed against three key areas as appropriate:

- The development of core knowledge and understanding, including the range of enterprises and the key features and factors that contribute to an enterprise's level of success
- The development and application of skills such as analysing research, information, planning and financial forecasting, communicating and problem solving
- Reflective practice through pitching an idea for an enterprise activity that allows learners to reflect on their own communication skills and the viability of their enterprise activity following feedback.

Application: Develop the learner's skills, knowledge and understanding in contexts that are directly relevant to employment situations, thereby enhancing their employability within the business sector.

Study Skills | Students will develop skills in research, report writing and presentation skills; in addition to the software skills that will enhance their ability to gather information and communicate professionally.

Personal skills | Demonstrate the skills needed to participate in the operation and development of real business organisations. Students will develop the ability to work autonomously and effectively in a business context.

Careers | The Year 9 course has been designed to recognise students' achievements in a modern and practical way, that is relevant to the workplace. This will support students continuing into KS4. If students choose to continue with their studies at KS4, Edexcel's GCSE (9-1) in Business provides students with a broad foundation of knowledge required for further study in Business, including AS/A-Level and appropriate Level 3 Business courses.

Education | Progression to GCSE Dance, and then onto KS5 A Level Dance or BTEC Performing Arts.

Course Details | Dance is a powerful and expressive subject which encourages students to develop their creative, physical, emotional and intellectual capacity, whatever their previous experience in the subject. Students will develop confidence, communication skills and the ability to perform to an audience.

Development of skills

Performance | Students will learn set phrases to perform as a solo. Students must know, understand and apply the following skills to accurately and safely reproduce the action, dynamic and spatial content shown in the original set phrases. Students must learn how to perform as part of a duet / trio dance. This will include relationships including contact work. You will explore physical, technical, expressive and mental skills.

Choreography | Students will learn to improvise and choreograph solo and group material. This will include responding to a stimulus, generating and structuring movement material.

Appreciation | Appreciation of dance and the constituent features of set design, costume, accompaniment, lighting and movement material, planning and delivering rehearsals. We will begin to explore works from the GCSE Dance anthology to provide a wider understanding of the different types of dance.

You **MUST** be prepared to perform as a solo dancer, work in groups for group and choreography tasks, be prepared to be filmed for assessment purposes and perform in school events.

Equipment required | Dance Kit: track suit bottoms/leggings, t-shirt, bare feet, hair tied up. We work with local theatres to achieve the best possible prices and discounts for attending professional performances; financial contributions towards trips to the theatre and visiting workshops will be required. Families may prefer to make their own arrangements for trips at weekends/holidays. Students need to attend rehearsals for practical assessments in addition to lessons.

Careers | Dance Performance, Teaching, Choreography, Fitness, Performing Arts, Arts journalism.

Education | Progression to GCSE Product Design, and then onto A-Level Product Design.

Course Details | Students in Year 9 are in a 'transition' into GCSE. They have units of 9 to 10 weeks where they will explore different contextual challenges and design briefs that will result in a 'design' and 'make' prototype product. Students will be able to experiment with materials and processes as well as develop their own practical skills. Students will follow a series of design and make challenges that will enhance and develop the skills of designing, prototyping, testing and analysing.

Within these units of work our pupils are challenged to take risks, collaborate with others and use creative and critical thinking skills in a range of design and make activities that inspire, motivate and enthuse pupils from all backgrounds and abilities. Examples of products that students will be making in this year: Blister Packaging and prototyping, Audio Amplifier prototype, Gravity Die Casting Pewter, Biomimicry inspired storage organiser, among others.

Written evaluation and technical knowledge will support the transition towards examination courses at Key Stage 4.

Assessment | Students will be assessed in a similar way to how they have been assessed in Years 7 and 8 with assessment points throughout the year. Projects will be assessed with an emphasis on knowledge gained but also the development and execution of skills, these can sometimes be in the form of self-assessment, peer assessment and more formalised; end of topic tests.

Development of skills | Practical Skills: The development of practical skills and capabilities using materials including paper and card, modelling Styrofoam, 2D and 3D CAD/CAM (computer aided design/manufacture) as well as wood metal and plastics to make products.

Study Skills | Students must clearly demonstrate the important skills of:

- Identifying and investigating design possibilities
- Producing a design brief and specification
- Developing creative design ideas
- Realising a practical product from the developed design ideas
- Testing, analysing and evaluating their product

Equipment required | Students will need to provide or fund materials for the course.

Approximately £20 per year.

Careers | Engineering, Furniture Design, Product Design, Architecture, Graphic Design, Construction to name but a few. Students can use this subject to specialise in a future career, but most will use the course to support their broad base of learning, general knowledge and skill development.

Education: Progression onto WJEC Hospitality and Catering and onto catering courses at college

Course Details |

A course in Food Technology provides a seamless progression from Key Stage 3 culinary foundations to the vocational expertise required for Hospitality and Catering at Key Stage 4. This practical focus allows students to apply their developing skills in a real working environment, preparing and serving food for school events such as the Celebration of Achievement evening and Macmillan Cancer charity fundraising.

Students will build upon their core knowledge of nutrition and safety to understand the wider Hospitality and Catering industry, mastering the techniques to create nutritious, industry-standard meals. The curriculum covers the full scope of operations, from front-of-house etiquette to kitchen and event management. Students learn to strictly adhere to government regulations, food safety laws, and professional working practices within a commercial setting.

Assessment | Students will use the KS4 assessment criteria to become familiar with the level of skill needed to be successful beyond Year 9 if they choose to continue. They will be assessed on their knowledge of the catering industry and then how they can apply their learning to safely prepare, cook and present nutritional dishes. There is a balance between practical cooking and baking and written theory, to replicate the experience at KS4.

Equipment required: Students will need to provide or fund materials throughout the course - Approximately **£20 per half term**.

Careers | A wide range of jobs in the hospitality and catering industries including front of house, food preparation and service, along with customer relations. Students can use the subject to specialise in a future career, but most will use the course to support their broad base of learning, general knowledge and the development of life skills.

Education: Progression to GCSE Drama, and then onto KS5 A Level Drama or BTEC Performing Arts.

Course Details: Drama engages and encourages students to become confident performers and designers with the skills they need for a bright and successful future. Students must learn how to collaborate together to create a piece of performance work from a stimulus. They must perform as part of a group and be able to deliver a monologue independently. They will learn how to interpret script and realise character and dramatic intentions. Finally, they will attend theatre performances and analyse the audience responses and theatrical conventions. It is very important to note that a significant focus of the drama skills in year 9 will look at how to write about and appraise drama.

Development of skills: Performing, Creating, Responding.

Creating Devised Drama | Students will create performance using theatrical devices from a stimulus. Students will develop the skills and confidence to document the process of creating the piece of drama in a devising log. At GCSE this log is a written piece 2,500 words long.

Performing Scripted Drama | Students will interpret characters from script with awareness of their cultural, historical and social significance.

Responding Skills | Analysis of the acting skills and production elements involved in creating live performance, appreciation and understanding of live performance, critique and analysis of live performance. Students will learn to appraise vocal and physical skills.

Equipment required | Drama kit: t-shirt, jogging bottoms. Although we work with local theatres to achieve the best possible prices and discounts, financial contributions towards trips to the theatre and visiting workshops will be required. Generally, the best available prices are on weekdays and although we endeavour to return to school as early as possible, London trips will cause students to have a late night. Parents/carers are welcome to make their own arrangements for trips at weekends or in half term holidays if they would prefer to avoid this. You will need to attend rehearsals for practical assessments in addition to your lessons. You will need to purchase scripts for *The Woman in Black* (live performance) and *The Crucible* (Set Play) and a box file to store their notes in. You will be provided with other scripts, which you will be responsible for and bringing to every lesson. You are expected to perform at school events.

You MUST be prepared to be filmed for assessment purposes.

Careers: Acting, performing, public speaking, arts administration, teaching, arts-in-education, arts journalism.

Education | Students can progress onto GCSE Music and then onto A Level Music or BTEC Performing Arts.

Course Details | Students will develop experience a range of different music genres and skills, building on the foundation of Years 7 and 8 to support transition to GCSE if they would like to, increasing their listening skills, creativity and performing skills. Students will gain an understanding of Music across a vast range; classical, pop, world music and learn how to compose your own music.

Development of skills | Performing, Composing, Appraising

Performing Music | Solo and ensemble performances comprising at least 4 minutes combined duration. You can perform on an instrument or voice, but should be having regular lessons.

Composing Music | Composition skills exploring, melody, rhythm, texture, timbre, dynamics and structure. Compositions will be in response to a brief set and/or a free choice of composition

Listening and Appraising Music | Areas of Study will be selected from the GCSE Music anthology, dictation and unfamiliar pieces. Extended written response skills will also be developed.

Personal skills

- Team work and collaboration.
- Abilities in self-discipline, focus and self-improvement through rehearsal techniques.
- Confidence and collaboration performing to an audience
- Analytical skills in studying set works and music through time.
- Writing music with use of harmony and other key elements of music.
- Ability to listen 'intelligently' providing focus and self-discipline.
- Recognition of music theory and of reading and writing music.

Equipment required | Your own instrument or voice and you MUST be having weekly lessons on that instrument in order to continually be improving as a musician to meet the performance requirements. Please check with Miss Mayhew or Mrs Pinto, if you have any queries about bringing in instruments. We are now also able to offer hire of instruments through Bucks Music Trust. You must have lessons on an instrument or voice. The exam board assess performances as 'standard' at approximately Grade 4. Although we work with local theatres to achieve the best possible prices and discounts, financial contributions towards trips to concerts and visiting workshops will be required. Generally, the best available prices are on weekdays and although we endeavour to return to school as early as possible, London trips will cause students to have a late night. Parents/carers are welcome to make their own arrangements for trips at weekends or in half term holidays if they would prefer to avoid this.

You are expected to perform at school events and will have the opportunity to assist with workshops in the feeder schools.

Careers | Jobs might include composing, performing, marketing, sound engineering, production and post production on film and TV, editing, music technology, recording studios, sound and lighting technician, teaching, conducting.

Education | The Year 9 Physical Education introductory course can lead to two different KS4 courses; GCSE, Cambridge National Certificate in Sports Studies. Opportunities will be possible for progression onto KS5 study e.g. A Level Physical Education or the vocational Level 3 BTEC National in Sport. Students may study Sports Science or a Sport related degree at University.

Course Details | Students will receive an introduction to the world of PE by developing an understanding of how the training principles aid performance in physical activity. It will appeal to those students who have a keen interest in sport and the human body, human biology and always look forward to their PE lessons. It is beneficial to be participating regularly in at least one organised sporting activity. You will learn about the benefits of sport and exercise and develop the knowledge required to improve your own performance in a range of physical activities. The course promotes a healthy active lifestyle and will give you experience in a variety of leadership roles.

Assessment | Students will be assessed in a variety of different ways, drawing on methods from the range of KS4 courses to support the development of skills specific to each one. This will allow them to be prepared for continued study in whichever is most appropriate for them. If they choose not to continue with this subject as a formal qualification at KS4, they will have extended their learning considerably.

Development of skills

Practical Skills:

- Develop your knowledge and practical performance in 3 key areas of physical activity.
- Develop a variety of observation and analysis techniques.
- Develop your ability to evaluate yours and others performance.
- Your ability to plan, perform and improve your performance in a key activity.

Study Skills

- Develops your use of critical language as part of the evaluation process.
- Develops your ability to understand how the principles of training can identify, test and improve components of training.
- Develop your use of performance analysis software.

Personal

- Develops your ability to work collaboratively as part of a group or team.
- Promotes communication through oral feedback sessions and leadership activities.
- Develops your ability to respond to constructive feedback.

Other requirements

- PE Kit
- Participation in your Core PE lessons
- Prepared to participate in extra-curricular activities and represent the school as appropriate

Careers: Study of Sports related courses will develop transferable and key skills that employers are looking for, leading to a wide variety of employment opportunities in and around the sports industry. The ability to bolt on further training in such areas as recreational management, leisure activities, coaching, officiating, the fitness industry and civil service, means these qualifications can lead to a number of careers in the sports industry. Opportunities exist in Sports Science, PE teaching, sports nutrition and sports therapy.

Education | Students can go on to study GCSE RS and then onto A Level RS or similar related subjects such as Sociology.

Course Details | Religious Studies challenges students to explore life's 'ultimate questions' while developing essential critical thinking, reasoning, and communication skills. The curriculum investigates religious ways of life and 21st-century ethical dilemmas, helping students understand the profound impact of faith on individuals and communities. Ultimately, students are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs, respectfully challenge the views of others, and present well-reasoned arguments on complex issues of truth, morality, and ethics.

Our Year 9 programme of study includes the following topics

- Core Christian beliefs and their relevance to issues of social justice
- Core Jewish beliefs and their relevance to peace and conflict
- Issues of birth, life and death
- Crime and punishment
- Philosophical debates surrounding the existence of God

Assessment | Students will be assessed during each topic through short recall tests and pieces of extended writing amongst other methods.

Development of skills

- **Practical Knowledge:** Investigate fundamental life questions and ethical dilemmas by exploring diverse beliefs, including Christian, secular, and philosophical traditions.
- **Study Skills:** Advanced evaluation, reasoning, and analytical thinking.
- **Personal Skills:** Self-reflection, social investigation, and clear, cogent communication.

Careers: If you choose not to continue philosophical investigation into GCSE and A-Level, studying Ethics and Philosophy in Year 9 will develop your ability to reason, clearly communicate, problem solve, empathise and recognise issues of ethical importance. These qualities lend themselves to all aspects of working life, especially journalism, politics, charity work, education and global affairs.

KS3 YEAR 9 CHOICES FORM 2026

CLICK THE LINK BELOW TO ACCESS THE FORM:

KS3 Choices Form

**DEADLINE
WEDNESDAY
18TH MARCH
2026**



PREPARE



ASPIRE



SUCCEED

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