



OXFORD

HIGH SCHOOL

G D S T

YEAR 9 CURRICULUM

2025-2026

Contents

ANCIENT GREEK	3
ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN	4
BIOLOGY.....	4
CHEMISTRY.....	6
COMPUTER SCIENCE	7
DRAMA.....	7
SPEECH AND DRAMA	7
ENGLISH	8
FRENCH	8
GEOGRAPHY.....	9
GERMAN.....	9
HISTORY	10
ITALIAN.....	10
LATIN.....	11
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SKILLS.....	12
MANDARIN CHINESE.....	13
MATHEMATICS.....	13
MUSIC.....	14
PSHCE (PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH, CITIZENSHIP AND ECONOMIC) EDUCATION.....	15
PHYSICS	15
POSITIVE PROGRAMME	16
RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS (RPE)	17
RUSSIAN	17
SCIENCE AND BUSINESS.....	18
SPANISH	19
THE NEURODIVERSITY AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT HUB (NASH)	19
PE & SPORT	21
TEXTILES.....	22

ANCIENT GREEK

The pupils will be embarking on their second year of Greek and as such we have devised a new course which will give them a thorough grounding not only in the language but also in the civilisation and literature of the ancient Greeks.

There will be three elements to the Year 9 Greek course:

- 1) Language
- 2) Literature
- 3) Civilisation

Language

The Year 9 course will build on the pupils' knowledge of the Ancient Greek language and the sense of the cultural significance of the Ancient Greeks from the Year 8 Gratin course. Pupils will subsequently be able to study Greek for GCSE with confidence.

Noun declensions and verb tenses will be presented logically, being introduced first in reading passages and then practised in exercises. We will translate from Greek to English with some translation from English into Greek, and pupils will learn traditional grammar tables with care. We will emphasise the importance of reading aloud and discuss the presence of Greek in English. By the end of Year 9 the pupils will have covered the majority of the structural Greek grammar needed for GCSE.

Pupils who choose Greek will develop greater linguistic awareness and the ability to think logically and decode complicated structures. Focusing on authors' styles and the emphatic position of words in sentences will not only prepare girls for GCSE Greek but develop close reading and analytical skills. We will use Taylor's Greek to GCSE Books I and II which also gives the opportunity to learn about Greek history through stories in ancient Greek.

Literature

The pupils will study some of the most important works of Western Literature in English translation. We will read selections from Homer's *Odyssey* and a number of Greek plays including Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* and Aristophanes' *Frogs*. This will give the pupils all the background they need to start their GCSE texts in Year 10 and will provide them with a superb insight into Greek literature.

Civilisation:

The pupils will learn about entertainment in the Greek world, focusing on the Olympics and Greek theatre and we will study the art and architecture of the Greeks. This will give the pupils an in-depth knowledge of the ancient world and an opportunity to research key aspects of the way the ancient Greeks lived.

In Year 9 we will be going on a number of trips including the British Museum, Greek plays in Cambridge and London and, of course, the Ashmolean. We will also enter the Oxfordshire Classical Reading Competition and the Cambridge University Ancient World Video Competition. Pupils will gain a deeper understanding of the classical world through visiting speakers and lectures. The biennial Classics trip to Greece, scheduled for October 2026, will be open to those studying Greek.

ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN

In Years 7, 8 and 9 students will have the opportunity to think and act as artists, crafts people, and designers, working creatively and intelligently. The curriculum at KS3 is constantly evolving and developing to meet the needs of learners in a dynamic and changing world. The units of work that both open the minds of students to the potential of the subject and encourage them to become curious learners. The breadth of study will ensure those pursuing Art and Design to KS4 and beyond have learnt the key concepts, processes and skills central to the subject. The curriculum is designed to mirror the creative journey taken in projects on the GCSE and GCE Art, Craft and Design courses. Those not pursuing Art to KS4 will be able to apply the transferable skills learnt in Art across the curriculum, these include: drawing, creative problem solving, critical thinking, personal learning and thinking skills, research, investigative skills and analysis.

In Year 9 students will be introduced to more digital arts-based practice but also develop more traditional art skills as well. Work will be theme-based and students will be expected to work from direct observation and imagination to research and develop their own ideas for work. There will be an expectation to work more independently of project work with more flexibility offered on the range of outcomes. When embarking on their studies, students will need to take into consideration the formal elements of Art and Design. These are line, tone, colour, shape, form, space and texture.

Students will study 20th and 21st century artists and designers and work from different cultures as well. Critical studies will be completed for homework. Students will choose a piece of appropriate artwork, make some practical deconstructions and find out information about the artist. They will also analyse the piece of work, making their own judgements about the artists' use of formal elements and explaining how it relates to their own study. Other homework tasks will involve sketchbook work that will support the development of their sustained pieces.

There is an increased emphasis on independent decision-making and students will be encouraged to evaluate their own work in progress and make informed judgments about the success and purpose of their work. The course for this year will prepare students for GCSE in Art and Design and will include the following transferrable skills; creative problem solving, critical thinking, personal learning and thinking skills, research, investigative skills and analysis.

BIOLOGY

In Year 9 biology is taught as a separate science by specialist biology teachers and students will begin their Edexcel International GCSE biology course (Code 4BI1). Students will learn key biological principles from cell structure to biological molecules. They will also explore aspects of human biology including the respiratory and digestive systems and have an introduction into plant biology and ecology. Throughout Year 9, theoretical and practical elements of biology are explored in an engaging and exciting way to provide students with a secure foundation of knowledge and investigative skills to carry them forward into Year 10 and beyond.

We teach in well-equipped laboratories and students will acquire skills in microscopy, microbiology, wet practical work, dissection, ecology, observation, experimental design, data interpretation and research. Investigative practical work is underpinned by a knowledge rich, spiralling curriculum designed to enable students to develop a deep, holistic understanding of the nature of biology.

In addition to end of topic tests, at the end of Year 9 students will have a summer exam paper (of one hour), testing their knowledge and understanding of the subject. This provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their understanding of the course so far and for teachers to provide meaningful, targeted feedback.

By the end of Year 9, most students opt to carry on with the separate sciences however there is also the opportunity for students to opt for a 'double award' course, which has the same degree of challenge just less content (Edexcel International GCSE Double Award Code 4SDO). Subsequent uptake of biology at A-level (from both double and triple award) is very high, with approximately half of the Year 12 cohort choosing to study A-level biology.

Year 9 topics include:

- Cell biology and diffusion
- The respiratory system
- Enzymes, digestion, and nutrition
- Sexual reproduction in flowering plants and plant transport
- Ecology

CAREERS

The Careers Department exists to support every pupil in preparing for life after school. This very broad remit is delivered through a variety of methods including dedicated Life Beyond School PSHCE blocks in every year group. The Careers Centre is well-stocked with books, prospectuses and extensive online resources, and all pupils are welcome to drop in at any time to discuss their ideas or ask questions. Alongside this, pupils benefit from one-to-one guidance, psychometric testing, encounters with employers and the world of work via work shadowing, volunteering and work experience, a wide range of external speakers covering careers and higher education options, conferences, networking events and careers fairs. This comprehensive Careers and Employability programme ensures that students can access relevant information, understand their opportunities, develop the transferrable skills they need and make detailed progression plans to achieve their ambitions.

In Year 9, pupils are supported in choosing their GCSE options. They have the opportunity to reflect on their choices and to understand the implications for their future plans, and one-to-one guidance is available to all pupils. More broadly, the focus is on Employability Skills, as pupils explore what employers are looking for in their employees. They will learn to distinguish between hard versus soft skills, and consider their own skills profile and how they can use their existing experiences to demonstrate key skills, focusing on Teamwork, Leadership and Research skills, and this is reinforced by participation in the Begbroke Science & Business challenge. Pupils will be encouraged to participate in a formal Work Shadowing Day, where they go to work with a parent for a first-hand workplace experience. For those unable to accompany a parent, there will be the opportunity to complete a project day which explores careers and opportunities of interest to them, and allows them to develop their presentation skills, teamwork and creativity.

CHEMISTRY

In Year 9 students will begin their Edexcel International GCSE Chemistry course (Code 4CH1) which will ultimately result in an IGCSE Chemistry qualification and be examined in June 2028. Students will learn the underlying principles of chemistry, from atomic structure to moles, bonding to electrolysis, incorporating key physical, inorganic and organic chemistry topics. The course provides a stimulating, challenging and enjoyable journey through this engaging subject, with theoretical and practical chemistry carefully balanced to enable pupils to build on the skills learnt during KS3. The ability to observe, record, critically analyse, and effectively evaluate practical work is emphasised as the course progresses, and provides an important aspect to their chemical understanding. In general, the experimental skills introduced in Years 7 and 8 are revised and extended by widening the experimental tasks and encouraging pupils to link the practical with the theory.

By the end of year 9, most students opt to carry on with the separate sciences however there is also the opportunity for students to opt for a 'double award' course, which has the same degree of challenge just less content (Edexcel International GCSE Double Award Code 4SD0). At the end of year 9 students will have a summer exam paper (of one hour), testing their knowledge and understanding of the subject.

The IGCSE is taught by subject specialists in designated laboratories. In year 11, the students will sit 2 papers, one worth 110 marks (2 hours; worth 61.1% of the total international GCSE) and one worth 70 marks (1 hour and 15 minutes; worth 38.9% of the total international GCSE). There is no practical coursework component but questions will be based on their experimental work involving skills, analysis and the evaluation of methods examined within the papers.

Although pupils inevitably sit exams, we aim to foster a deeper interest in the subject, extending pupils beyond the confines of the course. There are many enrichment opportunities on offer, from stimulating lectures to independent research projects, as well as practical and essay-based competitions to give pupils the scope to explore and develop their own interests in this broad subject.

Overall, whether pupils opt to choose the Double Award or separate science option, either one of these represents an excellent background to the study of Chemistry at A-level.

Content

The topics covered in Year 9 are likely to include

- The Fundamental Ideas in Chemistry including matter and diffusion.
- Elements, compounds, mixtures and separation techniques.
- Atomic structure, bonding and the Periodic table
- Metals and the Reactivity Series
- Structure of giant and molecular substances
- Gases in the atmosphere

Student Textbook/Support Material:

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE (9-1) Chemistry Student Book by Jim Clark, Steve Owen, Rachel Yu (ISBN 978-0435185169)

COMPUTER SCIENCE

At the heart of the Computer Science course is computational thinking – developing the ability to break down problems and express solutions in a way that can be solved by a computer. Girls will extend their skills and knowledge in programming to solve problems in a variety of contexts. The course will include:

- Binary representation of data and binary calculations
- Circus of project challenges (using various hardware attached to a Microbit)
- Developing simulations within a virtual world
- The CS behind AI and machine learning

Alongside this they will continue to develop the more generic digital literacy and IT skills that are of value across the curriculum.

DRAMA

In Year 9 performance skills are refined and extended, developing further their experience of a range of styles and genres. There are workshop lessons covering:

- A range of performance skills
- Further text-based work, using a range of theatre practitioners practice.
- Technical and design theatre.

Students are encouraged to present performance work to their peers.

SPEECH AND DRAMA

For students wishing to focus particularly on voice and speech, Oxford High School offers co-curricular speech and drama lessons where, working in small groups, they are prepared for the Trinity College graded examinations. They perform different genres of theatre and develop poise and self-confidence. Application forms with full details may be obtained from the Admissions Office.

ENGLISH

English in Year 9 continues to build on the variety of experiences, texts and written skills developed in Years 7 and 8, while anticipating the progression to IGCSE in Year 10 and beyond. The study of literature continues to be vital and, as well as encountering ambitious and intriguing texts from the English literary canon, your daughter will become a more confident critical thinker by exploring material generated by the increasingly complex world she experiences through films and the media. She will continue to develop her own writing in different forms, and we will guide her in finding her own voice when writing and speaking for different audiences and purposes.

As ever, we aim to broaden pupils' experience of English outside of the classroom, providing opportunities for clubs, competitions, and whole year-group trips to enrich pupils' studies and their enjoyment of the subject.

Year 9 Topics and Skills		
Topic	Skills focus	Associated Assessment
Drama	Writing effectively about drama – Shakespeare play	Essay with focus on language analysis
Poetry	Focus on literary heritage. To include different forms as will be reflected in the IGCSE examined poems, including narrative, sonnet, dramatic monologue, lyric poem, metaphor.	Essay to build on analytical skills
Prose	Focus on sophisticated analysis	IGCSE paper essay-style question
Media	Focus on critical literacy	Analytical presentation on chosen aspect, e.g. the presentation of women in advertising
Language	Transactional writing to learn forms included most commonly in IGCSE Language papers – e.g. letters, interviews, descriptive writing, narrative writing etc.	Transactional writing piece

FRENCH

Textbook: *Studio 3 Rouge (higher)* with accompanying activteach software

The main aim at this stage is to continue to equip pupils with the language skills which will be helpful on a visit to France. This year, the topics will be related to the life of a teenager, from their social life, to their health and projects for the future.

As in Year 8, equal emphasis will be placed upon developing skills in both the spoken and written language. The present and passé composé tenses will be revised and the future and the imperfect will be introduced. By the end of this year, it is hoped that pupils will be beginning to vary their use of these tenses appropriately both in speech and writing when dealing with subjects such as daily life at home and at school, leisure activities or weather.

GEOGRAPHY

We further develop and extend the range of skills learned in Years 7 and 8 and lead into the GCSE course.

Our approach is enquiry based. We seek the answers to geographical questions posed by the topics covered and use a variety of different sources to help us.

Year 9 forms the foundation year of the GCSE syllabus and we follow the GCSE AQA (8035) specification. The year covers a balance of human and physical Geography and uses a range of resources to support learning.

The Year 9 course -

- **The Challenge of Resource Management**
What are resources? How does resource consumption vary globally? A focus on the resource of water - How do large scale water transfer systems operate? How do we ensure a sustainable water supply in LIC's?
- **Natural Hazards - Tectonic Hazards**
How do these large-scale forces affect the structure of the Earth's surface? What are the resulting landforms and associated hazards of volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and tsunamis? How do impacts and management vary globally?
This topic is complemented by a workshop from the Earth Science Department at the University of Oxford.
- **Urban Issues and Challenges**
What factors affect urbanisation?
How has urban growth in Kampala, Uganda created opportunities and challenges?
How has urban planning improved the life of the urban poor in Kampala, Uganda?
- **Geographical Application**
An issue evaluation with pre-release materials.

Textbook: AQA GCSE (9-1). Hodder Education. Widdowson et al.

Supporting GIS software: DigiMaps for Schools; Google Earth online.

GERMAN

The main purpose of learning German, as with any foreign language, is to be able to communicate effectively with the native speakers of that language. In Year 9 the emphasis is as much on reading and writing in German as on oral and listening work; the study of grammar is more intensive than in the first year of the course. The girls gain a deeper understanding of the culture and civilisation of Germany. The first two years of the course enable girls to get by in German; the IGCSE course builds upon this.

Textbook: *Echo 2 Express*

Topics: Talking about holidays; going shopping for clothes and food; clubs; health; out and about in town; an exchange with a school in Germany.

Grammar: The perfect tense; use of negatives; prepositions with accusative/dative; basic adjective agreement; the imperative; subordinating conjunctions; more advanced word order.

There is an annual visit from the theatre group Onatti, who perform an entertaining play in the language. We participate in the events organised by the Oxford German Network; for example, the annual Oxford German Olympiad and the Christmas Biscuit baking Competition!

We have a very successful exchange programme with a school in Munich, and girls in year 9 are very welcome to participate. The next exchange will take place in March/April 2027.

HISTORY

Skills

We aim to hone the skills which girls have acquired in Years 7 and 8, helping them to produce well-argued and organised essays, to analyse and evaluate source material, and to produce well-researched and clearly laid out notes. Students will be familiar with many of the skills required at GCSE level by the end of Year 9.

Content

The focus of the Year 9 History course is the Industrial Revolution and twentieth century British and European history. The topics will include the changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution, living and working conditions in the nineteenth century, the struggle for women's suffrage, the causes and course of the First World War, the contribution of British Empire troops, the Treaty of Versailles, the rise of the dictators in the inter-war period.

Textbooks

Colin Shephard, Andy Reid and Keith Shephard, *Peace & War*

These are supplemented by a variety of other books; film and interactive resources are also used, and use of the School Library is encouraged.

ITALIAN

Italian in Year 9 offers students an exciting opportunity to begin learning a brand-new language from scratch. As the first year of a three-year course, the focus is on building strong foundations in both the language and the culture of Italy. Students develop key skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing, and are introduced to essential grammar, especially the present tense of regular and common irregular verbs.

Our carefully sequenced course is designed by the Italian Department specifically for our students. Rather than following a single textbook, we use a variety of bespoke resources, enabling a highly

tailored and dynamic learning experience. Students are also given the *Amici* textbook for independent extension and challenge outside the classroom.

Topics: Introducing yourself and others; describing where you live; school life and daily routine; family and home.

Grammar: Present tense of regular and key irregular verbs; articles and gender; adjective agreement; simple and articulated prepositions; question formation; use of negatives; basic opinions and reasons.

Cultural awareness is central to the course. Throughout the year, students are introduced to Italian life, customs and traditions. We also bring the language to life through exciting co-curricular activities. Our annual **video exchange** with our partner school, *Liceo Scientifico* in Rossano, gives students the chance to communicate with native speakers of their own age and gain insights into the daily life of Italian teenagers. In the summer term, students enjoy our much-loved **Italian Cuisine Day** in Oxford – an immersive outing where they practise ordering in Italian and enjoy authentic Neapolitan pizza, while learning about Italy’s world-famous food culture.

By the end of Year 9, students will have the skills and confidence to express themselves in Italian on everyday topics and will be well prepared to deepen their knowledge in Years 10 and 11 as they continue the IGCSE course.

LATIN

The pupils will be embarking on their third year of Latin and as such we have devised a course which will give them a thorough grounding not only in the language but also in the civilisation and literature of the Romans.

There will be three elements to the Year 9 Latin course:

- 1) Language
- 2) Literature
- 3) Civilisation

Language:

By the end of Year 9 pupils will have met all the structural grammar of the language using *de Romanis* book II and will have covered all the vocabulary needed for GCSE. The principal activity will be translating from Latin to English with supporting exercises to consolidate understanding of grammar. We will encourage reading aloud and highlight the derivations of English and other modern languages.

Pupils who choose Latin will develop greater linguistic awareness and the ability to think logically and decode complicated structures. Focusing on authors’ styles and the emphatic position of words in sentences will not only prepare girls for GCSE Latin but develop close reading and analytical skills. We will use *de Romanis* Book II which also gives the opportunity to learn about Roman history through Latin stories.

Literature:

Pupils will study some of the most important works of Western Literature in English translation. We will read selections from Virgil's Aeneid and Ovid's Metamorphoses. This will give the girls all the background they need to start their GCSE texts in Year 10 and will provide them with a superb insight into Latin literature.

Civilisation:

The pupils will learn about entertainment in the Roman world and we will study the art and architecture of the Romans. This will give the girls an in-depth knowledge of the ancient world and an opportunity to research key aspects of the way the Romans lived.

In Year 9 we will be going on a number of trips including the spa town of Aquae Sulis, modern day Bath, and the Ashmolean. We will also enter the Oxfordshire Classical Reading Competition and the Cambridge University Ancient World Video Competition. Pupils will gain a deeper understanding of the classical world through visiting speakers and lectures. There will also be the opportunity to go on the biennial Classical trip to Italy/Sicily/Greece, scheduled for October 2026 (Greece).

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SKILLS

Reading for Pleasure

Reading enjoyment has been reported as more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status. Studies have also shown that those who read for pleasure have higher levels of self-esteem, greater ability to cope with difficult situations, and even improved sleeping patterns. This is why we want to enable all pupils to read for enjoyment as much as possible, with a well-stocked, up-to-date and diverse library, a librarian on hand every school day to help them find books they'll love, and dedicated Reading for Pleasure sessions run by the librarian for Years 7-10. This is where an English lesson is spent in the library with an array of exciting book-themed activities and discoveries, specially curated for each year group. We also celebrate World Book Day, Banned Books Week, and a schoolwide Reading Week, and have real authors visit the school to inspire. Keen readers can join Book Club and Creative Writing Club, or even volunteer as library reps for their form.

Information Skills

At Oxford High School we are keen to develop and support independent thinkers and learners, at the heart of which is information literacy: the ability to think critically and make balanced judgements about any information we find and use. It empowers us as citizens to develop informed views and to engage fully with society. With this in mind, librarian Ms McMorrow has developed an Information Skills curriculum for Years 7-10 and the Sixth Form, to help students locate, analyse and understand information across multiple platforms, online and offline, and to learn about academic integrity and the ethics of information. This is designed not only to support students' research and referencing skills when working on projects for school or university, but also their day-to-day engagement with the news, social media, TV and reading material, and recent changes to the information landscape such as artificial intelligence and Chat GPT. Information Skills lessons will be delivered by Ms McMorrow in conjunction with different subjects across the curriculum.

MANDARIN CHINESE

The aim for Year 9 is to allow the students:

- to develop Chinese language skills and gain cultural background knowledge to communicate effectively in China, or when in contact with Chinese speakers;
- to develop and practise their language skills by listening, speaking, reading and writing and to gain an awareness and understanding of the culture and the country;
- to use a sufficient range of structures and vocabulary to show linguistic flexibility when dealing with predictable or unpredictable situations; and
- to study vocabulary, grammar, spelling and pronunciation to develop Chinese language skills to an intermediate level.

The textbook used is Chinese GCSE Book Two, which is also called Chinese for Secondary School in Chinese. These a series of books recommended by the British Council and Edexcel. The skills of using ICT will be continuously developed, such as typing Chinese on a normal keyboard, practising reading/listening/speaking on Quizlet and GOCHINESE and other internet platforms.

Students will also have a trip to London to visit the British Museum to explore the history of China's cultural contacts with the rest of the world, go to Chinatown to view Chinese New Year decorations and have lunch in a Chinese restaurant. A residential trip to China will be offered in 2026.

MATHEMATICS

In Year 9 we begin the Edexcel IGCSE Mathematics A (4MA1) course. By allowing three years to cover the syllabus we have more time to reinforce students' understanding at the same time as broadening their perspectives, introducing them to new and increasingly complex concepts and, where appropriate, taking them beyond the specification. They will encounter a wide range of techniques which they can use to solve progressively more challenging problems, with emphasis placed on the ability to solve these non-routine problems by breaking them down into a series of stages. We will also spend time thinking about how to choose the most appropriate methods, the accurate use of symbols and language, and how to present clearly reasoned solutions.

Lessons in Year 9 develop the themes of Year 7 and Year 8, with the additional aim of familiarising the students with the specific demands of their IGCSE. The course is assessed by two equally weighted two-hour papers at the end of Year 11, both of which cover the whole syllabus. There is no coursework assessment.

Whilst there is a continued emphasis on the need to be able to perform written and mental calculations effectively, many of the topics now depend on the use of a scientific calculator and so it is vital students have one with them in all lessons. We also explore topics such as algebra, statistics,

and transformations in greater depth through the use of mathematical technologies, in particular graphing software and spreadsheets.

During the spring term, students can opt to take part in the UK Maths Trust Intermediate Maths Challenge. This national multiple-choice test challenges their thinking skills and logical reasoning as well as their mathematical abilities; every year many students are awarded certificates of achievement, with some winning through to the follow-on rounds.

MUSIC

Music in Year 9 is an option choice; we assume that students who choose music will be interested in the subject, but interest in music can take many forms, and a typical Year 9 class will contain a wide range of musical interests and levels of performing skill. Some pupils who opt for music as part of their academic curriculum will also have a high level of performing skill, and will have lessons on one or more instruments; however, this is not a prerequisite for success in Year 9 music. Lessons regularly involve playing and singing, and pupils are encouraged to bring their own instruments to lessons. Performing activities are differentiated to suit pupils' different levels of instrumental skill

The curriculum is organised around style-based topics. The topics have links to material covered on the GCSE syllabus, and is designed to lay a foundation for success in GCSE Music. However, we do not start to cover the GCSE syllabus itself in Year 9. Topics covered in Year 9 include Baroque Music/Ground bass, Opera and Musical Theatre, Fusions, Popular music in the 1960s, and 20th Century Experiments in Composition. Pupils will also carry out their own research project on a composer of their choice, and will compose an individual piece to a brief of their own creation.

Co-curricular groups: we encourage all pupils to take part in these. They include Lower School Choir (for all students in Years 7-9, no auditions), Chamber Choir (auditioned, Years 7-9), LSO (Lower School Orchestra - for students in Year 7-9 who play an orchestral instrument to approximately grade 3 standard or above), and chamber groups. The most advanced pupils may also be invited to join senior groups. These include Senior Orchestra (minimum standard Grade 5 - 6 on most instruments, but it may be higher on some wind and brass instruments), Concert Band (minimum standard grade 5 on woodwind, brass and percussion), and String Orchestra (minimum standard Grade 6-7). Details of all these will be advertised at the start of the year.

Associated Board practical grade examinations take place in school every term. Entries are made electronically: application forms are circulated by SchoolPost at the start of each term. With the recommendation of the teacher, these forms should be returned by the published deadline completed with all details, including a parental declaration to authorise the debit for the fees. If a student has lessons outside school, she is welcome to take her grade examinations here. Where the teacher feels it is the best option, pupils can also take ABRSM Performance grades (remotely assessed video exams) at school. The board has recently changed the system for sitting theory exams, which have now moved online; it is now better to enter these privately (parents can enter via the board's website) and take the exam at home.

PSHCE (PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH, CITIZENSHIP AND ECONOMIC) EDUCATION

At OHS we pride ourselves on our thought-provoking Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic (PSHCE) education, which covers a wide range of topics, inline with statutory guidance. The curriculum is carefully planned to follow national advice, ensuring that topics are covered in an age-appropriate manner. Students have 1 hour of PSHCE each week taught by a dedicated PSHCE team, which is supplemented by termly external speakers on a variety of topics.

In year 9, students cover the following topics areas:

1. Active Citizenship and human rights in the world around us.
2. Mental Health.
3. Life Beyond School and the world of work.
4. Physical Health and Body development.
5. Relationship and Sex Education.
6. Online and offline Choices.

We continually review and update our PSHCE provision, ensuring that it is both proactive and reactive, so students are able to make informed life choices, using up to date information, when matters arise. As well as this, we work closely with our pastoral teams to adapt to changing student needs. This gives students the chance to gain relevant knowledge and creates opportunities for discussion, at key times in their education journey.

We value parental involvement and will inform parents of lesson content at the start of each topic area. We also run 'keep in touch' talks for parents about key issues that students may face and are always open to hearing about any changing needs that may arise. Please contact Mrs Sheppard (Head of PSHCE and wellbeing) if you would like any further information.

PHYSICS

In Year 9 students will begin their Edexcel International GCSE Physics course (Code 4PH1) which will ultimately result in an IGCSE Physics qualification and be examined in June of Y11. The students will find the course stimulating, challenging and hopefully very enjoyable with lots of practical work. By the end of Year 9 most students will carry on with this course but there will also be the opportunity for students to opt for the double award science course which covers less content.

It is important that all work, notes and experimental sheets are filed away carefully as the work will ultimately be assessed at the end of year 11 in their final exams. All the marks obtained for their IGCSE will be based on the theory papers sat at the end of Year 11. The students will sit 2 papers, one worth 110 marks (2 hours; worth 61.1% of the total international GCSE) and one worth 70 marks (1 hour and 15 minutes; worth 38.9% of the total international GCSE). There is no practical coursework component but some exam questions will be based on their experimental work involving skills, analysis and evaluation. At the end of year 9 students will have a summer exam paper testing their knowledge and understanding of the subject and this will consist of some past paper questions.

They will have plenty of opportunity to do stimulating experiments, make observations and improve their understanding of how practical work links with the theory. In general, the experimental skills introduced in Years 7 and 8 are revised and extended by widening the experimental tasks and making them more open-ended. Students are encouraged to analyse, evaluate, draw conclusions and explain their ideas whenever possible.

Content

The topics covered in Year 9 are likely to include:

- Thermal Energy
- Energy Transfer
- Energy Resources and Electricity Generation
- Density and Pressure
- Forces and Motion

Study Textbook/Support Material:

'International GCSE 9-1Physics' (ISN 9781510405189)

POSITIVE PROGRAMME

As part of our Pastoral programme, we use strategies and tools from the Positive Schools Programme, led by Ms Julie Bramall. The GDST has committed to the programme as it strongly believes in helping students to learn about and be aware of their emotional intelligence. The programme teaches strategies to monitor their emotional health and ways to improve it if necessary, and these are integrated into PSHCE lessons throughout year groups within the school.

Within the Circus Programme, all Year 9 students will be taught techniques from **Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP)**.

Year 9 students are also introduced to further skills from the school's Positive Programme, such as using the Worry Filter, the inner coach, positive visualisation and empathy skills.

RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS (RPE)

There are three elements to the subject. Each approach is from a different perspective and discipline, and each asks pupils to consider the world around them in different ways. They are:

- Philosophy (The study of knowledge, reality and experience).
- Ethics (The study of morality and its application).
- Theology (The study of belief and beliefs).

At OHS we aim to cover all three elements of RS throughout KS3. Pupils will learn to discuss new ideas in large and small groups. They will develop their knowledge through written tasks and projects on a number of topics. Finally, they will demonstrate understanding through evaluative answers that require them to develop a sustained written argument through to a logical conclusion.

In Year 9, we begin to look at two units of the GCSE course as follows:

Islamic Practices:

- The 5 Pillars of Sunni Islam
- The 10 Obligatory Acts of Shi'a Islam
- Festivals
- Hajj

Christian Beliefs:

- God and Trinity
- Jesus: Life, Death and Resurrection
- Life After Death
- Sin and Grace

We also study some Applied Ethics:

- Abortion: laws; debates; case studies
- Euthanasia; laws; debates; case studies

RUSSIAN

The four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing the language are taught in every lesson. Initially emphasis is placed on continuing to perfect reading skills and to incorporate previous knowledge into longer phrases allowing the students to demonstrate an ability to converse in Russian on a variety of topics as well as write longer paragraphs and deal with more complex grammar constructions.

In this year of their Russian studies the students will learn a variety of tenses, there will be more emphasis on the correct use of basic cases as well as agreements. The topics will include shopping,

leisure and interests, holidays, descriptions, school and jobs. The learners will be able to produce a substantial piece of writing about various everyday topics, as well as manipulating the language to create original ideas.

IT - The students have access to the Interactive Whiteboard and extensive ICT resources to help them master the Russian keyboard; subscription to various online resources with a multitude of games and listening activities to expand the vocabulary knowledge beyond their usual lessons.

Penpal link - There is also a penpal link with our exchange partner school in Uzbekistan in which students may like to participate. A lunch time club will be available for that purpose.

Slavic club - students are warmly welcomed to this club, running at lunchtimes to learn about many aspects of the Russian speaking world.

DuoLingo challenge - each term students can compete in this challenge which will take their language knowledge to another level.

Russian trip

The Russian trip is considered and will take place during Easter holidays and the students spend a few days in a Russian speaking country immersing themselves into the world of Russian speaking. The outcome of the trip is priceless as the students' language skills become more confident and their fluency improves considerably.

Textbooks - *VNIMANIE* course produced by the Edexcel team, *KOMETA* resources and bespoke learning materials created by the department exclusively for our students.

Additional materials - films in the Russian language with English/Russian subtitles, authentic magazines and books in Russian. Realia from the Russian speaking world: newspapers, magazines, souvenirs, posters, postcards and books on geographical, historical and cultural aspects of the Russian speaking world.

SCIENCE AND BUSINESS

Year 9 students work in groups of roughly six to consider a piece of science each week discovered in the past few years. The students then come up with an imaginary product on the basis of that new scientific discovery and prepare a presentation to include the following business aspects of the product:

- Product ideas
- Customers
- Competition
- Price point
- Marketing strategy
- Why someone would invest in their idea.

This forms the start of the science/business connection that continues in further years through CREST awards, Conrad challenge and GDST Lead.

SPANISH

Those who opt to study Spanish in Year 9 will build on their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, learning new tenses and more sophisticated structures. The four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking continue to be practised and developed each lesson.

In Year 9 there is some emphasis on practical situations such as ordering food in a restaurant and making plans to go out. Students will also be able to talk in more depth about themselves, friendships, holidays, and free time, with the addition of talking about past events and future plans within these contexts.

For those who wish to take Spanish at GCSE level, the course equips students with a firm foundation in the language. By the end of the year, students should be beginning to vary their use of tenses both in speech and writing, and be able to tackle more challenging listening and reading exercises. A residential trip to Spain is offered to students of Spanish either in Year 9 or Year 10, as it runs every two years.

Materials – *Viva libro 2*

THE NEURODIVERSITY AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT HUB (NASH)

(which includes Special Educational Needs and Disability; and English as an Additional Language EAL)

Identification, and assessment

The NASH team ensure that all students' needs are identified early, assessed, supported and monitored.

- Some students have an identified learning need by the time that they join the Year Group. The NASH team communicate with parents, previous schools (where appropriate) to gather any relevant documentation such as Diagnostic Reports to help support the students. Once NASH have the appropriate reports, the NASH team disseminates information to teachers to ensure appropriate support (and Access Arrangements, when appropriate), is put in place. Support lessons are offered. (See SEND Provision)
- All Year 9 students have baseline testing in the autumn term. Tests include: reading comprehension, visual processing, maths processing, and free writing.
- All Year 9 students take the MidYIS assessment (devised by professional body: Cambridge Insight (formerly CEM) and the results are used as part of our identification and monitoring process
- In addition to the above, students' needs are often identified by parents, staff or by the student.
- Any identified difficulties/learning differences, and EAL needs are investigated by the NASH department through a combination of asking for teacher feedback and further assessment.
- Pupil Profiles are written by the NASH team and circulated to staff and information on EAL needs are relayed to staff.

SEND Provision and Monitoring

The Head of NASH and SENDCo, Dr Jacqueline Leadbeater, and the NASH team, work closely with all staff, parents, the student, and any outside agency to ensure the best possible provision for students with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND).

NASH provision includes targeted support from subject teachers, as well as Academic Support from NASH. It might also include support from the Pastoral Team, if appropriate. NASH offer one to one academic support sessions once a week (or more, if needed). These sessions take place within study periods, lunch times, and before or after school. The sessions cover a variety of learning strategies based on needs identified by the screening results, assessments, Educational Report, teacher comments, and the student. Such sessions often focus on improving reading comprehension, revision skills, examination technique, developing written work. They are highly individualised and based on the current need of the student.

If, after receiving targeted support from NASH and subject teachers, a student is still not making expected progress, arrangements for a more in-depth assessment are made after consultation with parents. These assessments will provide us with a better understanding and help identify areas where adjustments are needed to assist with learning. If a full educational assessment, or an assessment for Autism or ADHD, is deemed appropriate by NASH or parents, parents are advised by NASH as to the most appropriate agency.

Provision is monitored during one-to-one assessments, by the subject teacher, and regular assessments (when appropriate). Provision is adjusted accordingly.

NASH has an open-door policy which means that students can pop by for support, or to arrange support, whenever necessary.

At various points in the year, such as in the run up to examinations, NASH run Study Sessions, and deliver PSHCE sessions.

EAL Provision and Monitoring

Small group and one to one EAL support lessons are provided by our EAL teacher, Ms Melanie Tuck, if it is felt by subject teachers that a student needs additional support to access the curriculum. Some pupils are offered English Enrichment, if deemed appropriate by subject teachers and the NASH team.

Provision is monitored during one-to-one assessments, by the subject teacher, and regular assessments (when appropriate). Provision is adjusted accordingly.

Gifted and talented

All pupils have the opportunity to benefit from extension and enrichment within the daily curriculum, a range of competitions, and conferences.

PE & SPORT

The aim is to encourage, develop and create a lifelong and positive attitude towards physical activity. This is achieved by offering a dynamic, challenging, diverse and evolving range of sporting activities. Whether a recreational participant or elite performer all will be inspired, motivated and supported.

In the core curriculum students have one double PE lesson and one triple PE lesson. Students will participate in hockey, netball, football, badminton, volleyball, trampolining, swimming, water polo, athletics, tennis, table tennis, cricket, rounders, gymnastics and dance. Inter-house tournaments will also take place throughout the year across all sports.

The curriculum is supported by a strong co-curricular programme. Clubs are open to all students and the social participant and elite performer are both offered extensive opportunities. We truly believe in a sport for all ethos, as well as developing successful elite teams. There are also opportunities to assist with coaching and officiating.

Clubs and practices are held before school, at lunchtime and after school and are open to all, unless otherwise stated. These are:

Athletics	Rounders
Badminton	Rugby
Biathlon	Strength and Conditioning (High Performance Athlete Programme)
Cricket	Swimming
Cross Country	Table tennis
Dance	Tennis
Football	Tennis Coaching (fee payable)
Gymnastics	Trampolining
Hockey	Volleyball
Netball	Water Polo

Tennis coaching is available throughout the year. Application forms are sent out electronically in June.

Students are welcome to use the field or tennis courts at lunchtimes (if no clubs are running) but should be fully changed into sports kit.

Competitive Play

Local, regional and national competitions are entered. Fixtures against other schools are played during the week, with occasional Saturday tournaments. We pride ourselves on running A-D teams in a range of sports to give every student the opportunity to compete should they wish to.

Details are published at www.oxfordhighsport.net. Team lists are published approximately one week ahead of each match ready for players to confirm their availability. They confirm their availability by ticking the team sheet on the fixtures board.

Health and Safety

- Mouthguards and shin pads are compulsory for hockey.
- Hair should be tied back.
- Jewellery and watches must not be worn for PE or sport.
- Football boots are mandatory for play on grass pitches in autumn or spring terms.
- Trainers/astro boots to be worn for astro turf.
- Boots should be removed before going into the buildings.
- A shelf is provided outside the changing rooms for outdoor shoes.
- Two changing rooms are for swimmers and two are for all other sports.
- Pupils' lockers are provided in form rooms for each year group to place their games kit into.

Off-games: Procedure

An email or note from home explaining the reason for non-participation should be sent or given to the relevant teacher before the start of the lesson. Pupils then attend the lesson wearing PE kit so that they can help coach, officiate, record, umpire or observe the lesson if they are able to.

Sports Tours

We run a long-haul football, hockey and netball sports tour, currently to South Africa. This is an amazing opportunity to play sport and experience different cultures. This will be for when your child is in Year 10-13, depending when the trip falls, but we like to give as much notice as possible to enable parents to plan accordingly. Anyone who commits to these sports at OHS are welcome on the trip. Our next trip is in July 2026, with the one after that taking place in July 2029/30.

TEXTILES

Year 9 aims to build, extend and combine all the skills and techniques mastered in Years 7 and 8 but will develop them in a more personal and inventive manner. Work will be produced of range and depth through a style appropriate to the individual. Personal creativity is explored along with the mechanics of setting and working to a design brief.

Following areas are considered:

- developing ideas / exploring a personal theme
- collecting research and finding sources
- exploring images, colours, textures and patterns
- using time effectively
- experimenting with processes and techniques

- documenting design development and reviewing work in progress
- creating a final piece

A set brief is used to provide a focus for:

- selecting appropriate source imagery and resources
- exploring composition
- experimenting with materials and processes
- developing decorate surfaces
- using colour – choosing fabrics and dyes
- using texture – mixing techniques
- considering size and scale
- creating depth
- introducing detail
- developing a final presentation
- safe working practice
- collating experimental work in a sketchbook with annotation

Themes could include:

- architectural forms
- cultural diversity
- landscapes
- stories and narrative

Each project explores personal aims and objectives. It is hoped that the approach can mirror that required for GCSE with a balance between technical competence and artistic expression presented.