



Thornhill
Academy

Year 9

Curriculum preferences

Part 2



The other subjects are ranked
with 1 being your highest
preference



French

GCSE French follows the Pearson Edexcel Specification.	
Course Description	Assessed in 4 skill areas; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Covers topics such as family and friends, technology, hometown, the environment, holidays and school
Course Level	Level 2
Course Qualifications	GCSE
Examination	4 skills examined individually. Listening, speaking, reading, writing, 25% each.
Assessment	All examination assessment
Post 16 Education	A-Level French
Careers	Translation and interpreting, writing and journalism, diplomacy, tourism and hospitality, marketing, teaching, international business, security service
Skills and Attributes	Patient, self-reliant, driven, brave, creative, communicative, empathetic
For further information please see Mrs Todd (Head of MFL)	



Religious Studies is an option subject, and pupils follow the AQA GCSE Specification.	
Course Description	GCSE R.S. includes eight units of study. These include: Religion and Life (covering issues such as abortion, euthanasia and animal rights) Human Rights and Social Justice (covering issues such as prejudice, discrimination and poverty) Peace and Conflict (covering issues such as Just War, nuclear weapons and Violent Protest) Crime and Punishment (covering issues such as the aims of punishment, corporal punishment and the death penalty) Christianity Beliefs and Practices Islam Beliefs and Practices
Course Level	Level 2
Course Qualifications	GCSE
Examinations	Two Exams Each exam is 1 hour and 45 minutes
Coursework	No coursework
Assessment	2 x 1 hour 45-minute exams
Post 16 Education	A Level Religious Studies
Careers	Skills gained in religious studies such as evaluation and debating skills are widely used in many careers such as the medical profession, the legal profession (e.g. solicitor, police), media (e.g. journalism), social work and the education sector (e.g. teaching at primary and secondary level).
Skills and Attributes	Studying GCSE R.S. will help you gain and develop many skills including debating, evaluating, drawing conclusions, analysing text, using text to support beliefs and opinions and making informed decisions based on evidence and opinion.
For further information please see Mr Rice (Head of Religious Studies)	



Course Description	<p>Students undertaking the art, craft and design title are required to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the introduction to Section 2.</p> <p>Students are required to demonstrate the ability to realise creative intentions relevant to areas of study drawn from at least two of the following titles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine art • Graphic communication • Textile design • Three-dimensional design • Photography • Critical and contextual studies. <p>Students may explore overlapping areas and/or combinations of disciplines within any of the above titles.</p>
Course Level	Level 2
Course Qualifications	GCSE
Examinations	Unit 2- externally set assignment accounts for 40% of the overall grade. Pupils choose from a range of starting points set by WJEC, pupils then carry out investigations into their chosen theme, with the unit concluding with a 10-hour controlled assessment.
Coursework	60% portfolio 40% exam
Assessment	Unit 1: pupils are shown a wide range of artistic practices and techniques which they are then encouraged to further develop by working on personalised learning programmes. This unit accounts for 60% of the overall grade.
Post 16 Education	A Level Fine Art, Graphic Communications, Photography, Ceramics (3D)
Careers	Architecture, illustration, animation, game design, fashion design, and advertising,
Skills and Attributes	Pupils will explore a wide range of skills, including drawing, photography, printmaking, sculpture and ceramics
For further information please see Mrs Knowles (Head of Art)	

Art and design



Graphic communication

GCSE Graphic Communication follows the WJEC Specification.	
Course Description	<p>Areas of study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising • Communication graphics • Design for print • Illustration • Interactive design (including web, app and game) • Multi-media • Package design • Signage • Typography <p>Work is not limited to one area of study.</p>
Course Level	Level 2
Course Qualification	GCSE
Examinations	Unit 2- externally set assignment accounts for 40% of the overall grade. Pupils choose from a range of starting points set by WJEC, pupils then carry out investigations into their chosen theme, with the unit concluding with a 10-hour controlled assessment.
Coursework	60% portfolio 40% exam
Assessment	In unit 1 pupils are shown a wide range of artistic practices and techniques which they are then encouraged to further develop by working on personalised learning programmes. This unit accounts for 60% of the overall grade.
Post 16 Education	A Level Fine Art, Graphic Communications, Photography, Ceramics (3D).
Careers	Fine Art prepares pupils for careers in the creative industries, such as architecture, illustration, animation, game design, fashion design, and advertising
Skills and Attributes	Pupils will explore a wide range of skills, including drawing, photography, printmaking, sculpture and ceramics.
For further information please see Ms Knowles (Head of Art)	



BTEC Music follows the Pearson Specification.

Course Description	The BTEC Music Practice course is a practical, creative qualification that puts you at the heart of making music. You will perform, create, and produce music in a range of styles, developing your confidence as a musician and artist. You'll learn in a hands-on way, working both independently and in groups to rehearse, record, and perform. Using instruments, music technology, and your own musical ideas, you'll explore how real musicians work in the music industry.
Course Level	Level 1 / 2
Course Qualifications	BETEC
Examinations	Component 3: Responding to a Music Brief Task set and marked by Pearson completed under supervised conditions.
Coursework	Component 1: Exploring Music Products and Styles Component 2: Music Skills Development Both non-exam internal assessment set by Pearson, marked by the centre and moderated by Pearson.
Assessment	The Performing and Composing components (60%) are internally marked and externally moderated by Edexcel.
Post 16 Education	Level 3 courses, including BTEC National Diplomas in Music or Music Technology, A Level Music, or A Level Music Technology, as well as specialist college courses in performance, production, and sound engineering. Apprenticeships and training within the music and creative sectors.
Careers	Possible career pathways include performing musician, songwriter or composer, music producer, DJ, sound engineer, recording technician, music teacher, music therapist, and arts administrator.
Skills and Attributes	Strong musical performance and creative skills, confidence, self-expression, and technical ability using instruments and music technology. The course also builds important transferable skills such as teamwork, communication, time management, problem-solving, and resilience, all of which are highly valued in further education and the workplace.
For further information please see Mr Holden (Music teacher)	

Music



GCSE D&T follows the OCR Specification

Course Description	Design and Technology is purposeful, as well as being fun and exciting! Studying GCSE Design and Technology where pupils build on what has been learnt about designing and making in Key Stage 3. Pupils will use their knowledge and skills to design and make new and better solutions to real problems.
Course Level	Level 2
Course Qualification	GCSE
Examination	The paper is 50% of the course and includes calculations, short-open and open-response questions as well as extended-writing questions focused on: • analysis and evaluation of design decisions and outcomes, against a technical principle, for prototypes made by others • analysis and evaluation of wider issues in design technology. The paper is split into section A "core" and section B "material" categories
Non-Exam Assessment	Three contextual challenges will be provided by the board on 1st June each year, from which pupils must choose one to respond to. Pupils will produce a project which consists of a portfolio and a prototype. There are four parts to the assessment: • Part 1: Investigate • Part 2: Design • Part 3: Make • Part 4: Evaluate
Post 16 Education	A Level Design and Technology
Careers	Product Designer, Architect, Furniture Designer, Toy Designer, Industrial designer, Graphics Design, Engineering, CAD Technician.
Skills and Attributes	Creative, passionate, resourceful, able to communicate ideas, good listening skills, ability to take feedback, team worker, curious about the world around you.

Design Technology



Triple science

GCSE Separate Sciences is studied by students who want to study Biology, Chemistry, and Physics in greater depth.

Course Description	<p>You will study Biology, Chemistry, and Physics as three individual subjects, leading to three separate GCSEs. The content is more detailed and in-depth than Combined Science and is well suited to students who enjoy science or may want to study it further.</p> <p>Biology - students learn about cells, the human body, genetics, evolution, and the environment.</p> <p>Chemistry - students study atoms, elements, chemical reactions, and how chemistry is used in everyday life.</p> <p>Physics - students learn about energy, forces, electricity, waves, and space.</p>
Course Level	GCSE
Course Qualifications	3 GCSE grades in AQA Biology, Chemistry and Physics
Examinations	Separate Science: 2 exams per subject: 6 examinations in total (1 hour 45 minutes each) at the end of Year 11.
Assessment	<p>Each of the two units (in each subject) will be assessed by an examination. These units are assessed through two one hour 45-minute, 100-mark, tiered written examinations, containing ten questions.</p> <p>Each of the units is 50% of the qualification.</p>
Post 16 Education	A Level Sciences, STEM pathways.
Careers	Medicine, engineering, research, nursing, forensic scientist, astronomer, computer scientist.
Skills and Attributes	Practical, analytical, evaluative and problem-solving skills creating logical thinkers. Due to the increased content in the separate science qualifications pupils need to be dedicated and be able to manage their time effectively.

For further information please see Ms McIlwraith



Digital Technology

Course Description	Focuses on digital skills including data, cyber security, and the use of IT in business.
Course Level	BTEC
Course Qualifications	Digital Information Technology
Examinations	Written exam on theory and digital concepts.
Coursework	Controlled assessment tasks using digital tools.
Assessment	Exam and two controlled assessment units
Post 16 Education	A Level IT, Computer Science, apprenticeships.
Careers	IT Technician, Data Analyst, Cyber Security roles.
Skills and Attributes	Problem solving, digital literacy, organisation.
For further information please see Ms Riddle (Head of Digital IT)	



Drama

GCSE Drama follows the AQA specification.	
Course Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create and perform devised drama in response to a stimulus• Study the set text <i>Blood Brothers</i> by Willy Russell, exploring characters, themes, and theatrical ideas from the perspective of a performer, director, and designer• Analyse and evaluate live theatre to understand how performance choices create meaning for an audience.
Course Level	Level 2
Course Qualifications	GCSE
Examinations	<p>Component 1: Understanding Drama (40%) Written examination based on the study of the set text <i>Blood Brothers</i> by Willy Russell and the evaluation of a live theatre performance.</p> <p>Component 3: Texts in Practice (20%) Performance of two extracts from a scripted play to an external examiner</p>
Coursework	<p>Component 2: Devised Drama (40%) Students create and perform an original piece of drama in response to a stimulus, supported by written coursework.</p>
Assessment	Devising performance, written log, scripted performance and written exam.
Post 16 Education	Drama can lead to careers such as actor, director, drama teacher, theatre designer, stage manager, arts administrator, and roles within the film, television, and creative industries. The skills developed are also valuable in many other careers.
Careers	Students can pursue roles such as actor, director, screenwriter, drama teacher, theatre designer, stage manager, producer, and arts manager. The confidence, creativity, and communication skills developed through Drama are highly valued in many careers, including media, education, marketing, and public-facing professions.
Skills and Attributes	Drama builds empathy, resilience, problem-solving, and presentation skills, helping student's express ideas clearly and perform with assurance both on stage and beyond
For further information please see Ms O'Neill (Head of Performing Art)	



Film Studies

GCSE Film studies follow the eduqas specification	
Course Description	<p>GCSE Film Studies is an engaging and creative course that explores how films tell stories, create meaning, and reflect the world around us. Students study a wide range of films from different genres, cultures, and time periods, developing an understanding of how filmmakers use cinematography, sound, editing, and narrative to influence audiences.</p> <p>Film analysis with practical filmmaking</p>
Course Level	GCSE
Course Qualifications	GCSE Film Studies
Examinations	<p>Component 1: Key Developments in US Film Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes 35% of qualification.</p> <p>Component 2: Global Film: Narrative, Representation and Film Style Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes 35% of qualification.</p>
Coursework	<p>Component 3: Production non-exam assessment 30% of qualification</p> <p>This component assesses the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of film to a production and its accompanying evaluative analysis.</p>
Assessment	Exam and coursework.
Post 16 Education	GCSE Film Studies provides a strong foundation for further study, including A Level Film Studies, A Level Media Studies, BTEC Creative Media, and specialist courses in film, media, and production.
Careers	Film and television industry, including director, producer, screenwriter, cinematographer, editor, camera operator, and film critic, as well as roles across the wider creative and media industries.
Skills and Attributes	Creativity, critical thinking, and analytical skills, alongside teamwork, communication, and technical skills using film equipment and editing software. The course also builds confidence, problem-solving, and an understanding of visual storytelling.

For further information please see Ms O'Neill (Head of performing Art)



Hospitality and catering

BTEC	
Course Description	The Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Hospitality and Catering provides a comprehensive introduction to the food service industry, combining theoretical knowledge with practical, hands-on cooking. Students learn about menu planning, nutrition, food safety, and kitchen operations while developing culinary skills for employment.
Course Level	Level 1 / Level 2
Course Qualifications	WJEC Hospitality and Catering
Examinations	Written exam on hospitality theory.
Coursework	Practical cooking assessments.
Assessment	Exam and practical coursework.
Post 16 Education	Catering courses, apprenticeships.
Careers	Chef, Hospitality Manager, Catering Assistant.
Skills and Attributes	Organisation, teamwork, practical skills. Studying GCSE Hospitality and Catering develops essential practical cooking techniques alongside key employability attributes like communication, teamwork, time management, and attention to detail. Students gain industry-specific knowledge in food safety, nutrition, and menu planning, while fostering personal attributes such as working calmly under pressure, being organized, and maintaining high hygiene standards.
For further information please see Ms Tench	



GCSE Photography follows the WJEC Specification.

Course Description	<p>This title is defined as the practice of creating durable static or moving images by recording light with light-sensitive materials such as photographic film or digitally by means of an image sensor. Students undertaking the photography title are required to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the introduction to Section 2 through areas of study relevant to their chosen title. Areas of study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documentary photography• Photojournalism• Studio photography• Location photography• Experimental imagery• Installation• Moving image: film, video and animation. <p>Work is not limited to one area of study</p>
Course Level	GCSE
Course Qualifications	GCSE Photography
Examinations	<p>Unit 2- externally set assignment accounts for 40% of the overall grade. Pupils choose from a range of starting points set by WJEC, pupils then carry out investigations into their chosen theme, with the unit concluding with a 10-hour controlled assessment.</p>
Coursework	<p>60% portfolio 40% exam</p>
Assessment	<p>In unit 1 pupils are shown a wide range of artistic practices and techniques which they are then encouraged to further develop by working on personalised learning programmes. This unit accounts for 60% of the overall grade.</p>
Post 16 Education	A Level Photography, Art and Design.
Careers	Photographer, Graphic Designer, Media Careers.
Skills and Attributes	Creativity, observation, technical skills.
For further information see Ms Knowles (Head of Art)	

Photography



Sport Studies

Cambridge National Level 1/ 2 Sports Studies

Course Description	Combines practical sport with theory on sport.
Course Level	Cambridge National Level 1/2
Course Qualifications	OCR Cambridge National Sports Studies
Examinations	Written exam on contemporary issues in Sport. (40%) Coursework exploring sports relationship with the media (30%) Individual performance and leadership in a sporting activity (30%)
Coursework	Practical performance in selected sports.
Assessment	Exam, practical assessment and coursework.
Post 16 Education	A Level PE, Sports Science.
Careers	Sports Coach, PE Teacher, Fitness Instructor.
Skills and Attributes	Teamwork, fitness, leadership.
For further information see Mr McGee (Head of PE)	



Health and Social care

Pearsons Level 1/ 2 Health and Social Care	
Course Description	Provides a comprehensive introduction to the skills needed to be successful in the healthcare industry. BTEC Level 1/2 Health and Social Care is a practical, GCSE-equivalent course for students interested in working with people. It explores human development, health and wellbeing, and the services that support individuals, while developing key skills such as communication, teamwork and empathy.
Course Level	Pearsons BTEch (2022) Level 1/2
Course Qualifications	Pearsons Health and Social Care.
Examinations	Component 1 coursework (30%) Component 2 coursework (30%) Component 3 written exam (40%)
Coursework	Component 1 and Component 2
Assessment	Written exam and two pieces of coursework.
Post 16 Education	Level 3 Health and Social Care.
Careers	Nursing, Social worker, Support worker, Youth worker
Skills and Attributes	Teamwork, empathy, leadership.
For further information see Mr McGee (Head of PE)	



Statistics

GCSE statistics follows Edexcel specification	
Course Description	Focuses on data handling, probability and analysis.
Course Level	GCSE
Course Qualifications	GCSE Statistics
Examinations	Written examinations.
Coursework	None.
Assessment	Written exams.
Post 16 Education	A Level Mathematics, Statistics.
Careers	Data Analyst, Researcher, Finance.
Skills and Attributes	Numeracy, analysis, problem solving.
For further information please see Mr Hutchinson (Head of Maths)	



Computer Science

GCSE computer science follows the OCR specification.	
Course Description	This course covers a range of logical and numerical thinking. It also involves exploration of computer hardware. It involves programming using Python.
Course Level	Level 2
Course Qualifications	GCSE
Examinations	2 external examinations covering logic, programming conceptions.
Coursework	A non-exam assessment is needed
Assessment	No controlled assessment
Post 16 Education	Computer Science A level, programming, technical apprenticeships.
Career	Programmer, systems architect, network manager, IT technician.
Skills and Attributes	Logic Numeracy and maths Programming
For further information please see Mrs. Riddle (Assistant Principal)	

