



# RATCLIFFE COLLEGE

GCSE Options Information  
From September 2023

**CONFIDENCE AND VALUES FOR LIFE**

# GCSE Course Exam Board Guide

SUBJECT	BOARD	CODE	GRADING	LEVEL
ART	AQA	8201	9-1	GCSE
BIOLOGY	PEARSON	4BI1	9-1	IGCSE
CHEMISTRY	PEARSON	4CH1	9-1	IGCSE
CHINESE	PEARSON	4CN1C	9-1	IGCSE
COMPUTING	OCR	J277	9-1	GCSE
DESIGN TECH	PEARSON	1DT0 F	9-1	GCSE
DRAMA	WJEC	C690QS	9-1	GCSE
ENG. LANGUAGE	PEARSON	1EN2	9-1	GCSE
ENG. LITERATURE	PEARSON	1ET0	9-1	GCSE
FOOD	AQA	8585	9-1	GCSE
FRENCH	PEARSON	1FR0	9-1	GCSE
FURTHER MATHS	AQA	8365	9-1	GCSE
GEOGRAPHY	AQA	8035	9-1	GCSE

SUBJECT	BOARD	CODE	GRADING	LEVEL
GERMAN	PEARSON	1GN0	9-1	GCSE
HISTORY	PEARSON	1HI0 KR	9-1	GCSE
ICT	CIE	0983	9 - 1	IGCSE
LATIN	OCR	J282F	9-1	GCSE
MATHS	PEARSON	1MA1	9-1	GCSE
MEDIA	OCR	J200	9-1	GCSE
MUSIC	PEARSON	1MU0	9-1	GCSE
PE	AQA	8582	9-1	GCSE
PHYSICS	PEARSON	4PH1	9-1	IGCSE
R.S.	WJEC	C120PB	9-1	GCSE
SCIENCE - SINGLE	PEARSON	4SS0	9-1	IGCSE
SCIENCE - DOUBLE	PEARSON	4SD0	9-1	IGCSE
SPANISH	PEARSON	1SP0	9-1	GCSE

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# Headmaster's Introduction

## Choosing your options

In the first two years of Ratcliffe College Senior School, there is a programme of studies that has been largely decided for you. As you move up the School, you will have to take several important decisions.

The first of these requires you to select the optional GCSE subjects which you will take in Years 9, 10 and 11. You will receive help from your teachers, Tutors and your parents in making your decisions. The staff have prepared this booklet for your guidance which also includes information about opportunities for bespoke careers guidance during your GCSE courses.

At this stage in your school career, you should also consider the many opportunities available to you outside the classroom. Ratcliffe College offers a wide range of co-curricular activities: music, drama, sport, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Combined Cadet Force and many others. These provide opportunities for working in teams, taking responsibility, and are enjoyable and help shape your future lives.

Remember good grades secure interviews (at universities and when applying for

jobs) but personal qualities or soft skills, gained through activities such as problem solving, creativity, people management, negotiation and decision making, secure the university place or a successful job application.

For boarders, you have the opportunity to develop enhanced levels of resilience, personal organisation and self-discipline as part of the wonderful boarding community.

At Ratcliffe College, we believe in Encouraging Big Ideas, and with an outstanding team of staff working in close partnership with parents, we nurture young people's God-given talents, to help them achieve their full potential in the classroom and beyond. We will provide you with a clear pathway to a successful GCSE career, both in and out of the classroom. We hope that all of you – boarders and day students – will enjoy and make the most of the next five years at Ratcliffe, preparing for GCSE and then your A Level examinations in the Sixth Form. It should be a period of sustained effort and personal development of which you are proud.

**Mr J. P. Reddin**  
**Headmaster**



# Section 1

## The Key Stage 4 Curriculum



The Key Stage 4 Curriculum is studied in Years 9, 10 and 11. It consists of Core subjects and Option subjects.

The following sections outline the Core Curriculum and the Option subjects that are available, including the number of GCSE subjects studied and the procedure for making choices.







# The Key Stage 4 Curriculum

## GCSE Courses:

- **English**  
English Language or English Language and English Literature (Two GCSEs)
- **Mathematics**  
(More able students may be asked to complete **level 2 GCSE Further Mathematics** in addition to GCSE Mathematics)
- **Religious Studies**
- **Science**
  - o iGCSE in Science - Triple Award (Separate Biology, Chemistry and Physics)
  - o iGCSE in Science - Double Award
  - o iGCSE in Science - Single Award
- **Modern Foreign Language (MFL).**
  - o French
  - o German
  - o Spanish
  - o Latin

Although there will be a small number of EAL or SEND students who do not take a MFL.

## Option Subjects:

You will choose up to 3 GCSE/iGCSE subjects in addition to the core subjects.

The following subjects are offered as options:

- Art and Design
- Computing
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- French
- Geography
- German
- History
- Information Technology
- Media Studies
- Music
- Spanish
- Physical Education
- Triple Science: *Biology, Chemistry, Physics*

## Non-Examination courses:

### Games and Physical Education

This is not a GCSE course; however, Physical Education as an academic subject may be chosen as a GCSE option.

### Personal Social Health and Citizen Education


This is a tutorial programme, which will include provision for Personal, Social, Health Education, Citizenship and Careers.



# Making your choices

- You will be asked to make provisional choices of the subjects that you would like to study at GCSE by **Thursday 9th February 2023**.
- Once we have your preferred subject choices, we will create the option blocks in such a way that tries to satisfy the greatest number of combinations of subjects.
- We aim to have the final GCSE blocks produced by **Friday 24th February 2023**.

**Once you have made your subject choices, it may be possible to change an option after this date, providing that:**

- You are changing within an option block, or a particular combination works within the existing blocks.
- There is capacity within the group into which you wish to move.
- You make your  change within the **four weeks** of the Autumn Term in Year 9. After this date, you will have missed too much work to catch up.
- Any changes must be requested, as soon as possible, to your Tutor who will ask you to complete a option form change sheet.





# Making your choices

- Students will **normally take 9, 10 or 11 GCSE/iGCSE subjects**. There is, however, flexibility to take fewer subjects for those students for whom 9, 10 or 11 subjects are not appropriate.

- Students taking the **Triple Science** option study the three separate Sciences and **must** choose Triple Science in both Block C and as one of their options.

***It is recommended that only the most able scientists should take this option. If you are considering Triple Science, please consult with your Science teachers.***

- Your **English** teachers will advise you on whether you should take English Language and English Literature as a two GCSE course.
- Students preferring to study less than 10 GCSE/iGCSE subjects achieve this by **choosing a 'Private Study' option** in Block D, E or F (or by taking **English Language only**).

***Students can only choose Private Study in one Block.*** This option allows students some supervised curriculum time for private study.

A	B	C	D	E	F
English Language	French	Triple Award Science*	These option subjects would be arranged into 3 blocks (D, E and F) depending on student choices. They are shown here in alphabetical order only.		
	Spanish				
	German	Double Award Science	Art, Craft and Design	French**	Music
	Latin		Computing	Geography	Spanish**
English Language & English Literature	Learning Support	Single Award Science	Design and Technology	German**	Academic Physical Education
			Drama	History	
			Food Preparation and Nutrition	ICT	<b>Private Study Option</b>
	English as a Foreign Language			Media	<b>Triple Award Science*</b>

\* Students taking Triple Award Science in block C **MUST** also choose Triple Award Science as an option.

\*\* Dependent upon student numbers.

**Parents, please bear the following in mind when discussing choices with your child:**

- Do the subjects interest them?

*Spending time studying a subject that is of little or no interest to the student will be very demotivating.*

- Are the choices appropriate to possible career aspirations?

*Remember to keep pathways open.*

- Is the choice appropriate in terms of their abilities and strengths?

*A student should be realistic in their choice of subjects.*

- Try to choose a balanced set of options.

- Do not choose subjects because they like the teacher; the teacher may change.

- Do not choose a subject because your child's friend is doing it.

# Careers

**Choosing GCSE subjects is one of the first big decisions a student has to make.** Some students may have a good idea of the subjects they like and are good at and may have already considered plans for their future. Others will be unsure and will need advice from their Tutors, subject teachers and the Careers Office. The aim of Careers Education and guidance at Ratcliffe is to enable students to make well informed choices about their potential career paths and be well prepared to make transitions throughout their education and future careers.

**Careers sessions** are integrated into the PSHCE programme from Year 7 through to Year 13. These sessions introduce the students to the world of work and the options that they may need to consider after leaving mainstream education. Students are provided with ample opportunity to recognise and develop key employability skills. Year 11 students undertake CV writing sessions alongside **mock interview** and networking opportunities. There is also a series of opportunities to explore career and education pathways and interact with visiting speakers and institutions via our programme of INSPIRE talks from Year 10 - 13.

Year 10 students have the opportunity to sit a '**Morrisby Profiling Test**' in order to establish any aptitudes that they may have that could be useful for them in choosing a career path. Year 11 students then have the opportunity to book an appointment with a CAIG provider in order to gain professional guidance and support in looking forward to ascertain a potential career path that matches their strengths and interests. This service is also available to students throughout the duration of their sixth form studies.

In addition, Year 11 students are given the opportunity to participate in **work experience**, in the summer of Year 11. This is fully organised through LEBC, a local careers provision provider. Alongside this, our Careers Office works alongside the Old Ratcliffians Association, parents and local businesses in order to try to facilitate further opportunities for our students.

All students are able to use Unifrog, an online Careers platform in order to investigate and explore future choices and progression routes and produce a challenging but realistic plan for their future learning and work.

There is a dedicated Careers Office in the sixth form centre, which provides up to date information and materials regarding all career & university choices as well as apprenticeships and volunteering opportunities. Individual appointments are available throughout the school week and students are encouraged to regularly discuss their hopes and plans.

**Mrs Kate Grace is Head of Careers.** You can contact her via email on [Kgrace@ratcliffecollege.com](mailto:Kgrace@ratcliffecollege.com)

## Career Implications of GCSE/iGCSE Choices

Many requirements will be catered for in the Core Curriculum; for example, English and Mathematics at grade 4 or above are pre-requisites for most careers and courses in Higher Education.

For the majority of careers there are few, if any, essential subjects but there are a few that do require specific subjects. On this basis, sometimes it can be helpful to make GCSE choices with potential future A Levels and career choices in mind.

The Careers Office is happy to provide guidance for students and their parents. Please email Mrs Kate Grace, Head of Careers on [kgrace@ratcliffecollege.com](mailto:kgrace@ratcliffecollege.com) for personalised advice and support.

[www.study.com/](http://www.study.com/)

[www.careerpilot.org.uk/](http://www.careerpilot.org.uk/)

[www.thebalance.com/](http://www.thebalance.com/)

[www.careercentre.dtwd.wa.gov.au/](http://www.careercentre.dtwd.wa.gov.au/)

[www.sacu-student.com/](http://www.sacu-student.com/)





# Section 2

## The Core Curriculum



This section outlines in greater detail information about the subjects that are part of the Core Curriculum.

Remember there are some choices which you have to make within the Core Curriculum, e.g. the option to study English Literature as well as English Language or which Modern Foreign Language you may wish to study.

You should read the information carefully and talk to your teachers about the best choice of study for you.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

It is expected that all students in Years 9, 10 and 11 will follow a course leading to a GCSE in English Language. In many cases this qualification will be taught alongside the GCSE in English Literature, although some students may choose the single Language qualification. Your English teacher will advise which option is best for you. The English Language examinations will assess the two main areas of English study: reading and writing.

You will need to read and study a wide variety of texts from a range of times and authors, including 19th century non-fiction, 20th and 21st century fiction and literary non-fiction. All written work will require you to write as clearly and accurately as possible with a sense of appropriate audience and purpose.

You will also have an additional qualification called 'Spoken Language Endorsement' which is graded: pass, merit or distinction.



### Examination Details

**Paper 1** – 1 hour and 55 minutes  
Non-Fiction and Transactional Writing (50%)

- **Reading:** Questions on an unseen 19th century non-fiction extract.
- **Writing:** A choice of two transactional writing tasks.

**Paper 2** – 1 hour and 55 minutes  
Fiction and Imaginative Writing (50%)

- **Reading:** Questions on two thematically linked, unseen fiction extracts.
- **Writing:** A choice of two imaginative writing tasks.

## ENGLISH LITERATURE

In addition to studying English Language, many students will also follow a Literature course involving the reading and discussion of poetry, plays and novels. The English Literature qualification will be taught consecutively with the English Language qualification since there is a degree of overlap in the examined skills. This will result in the award of **two separate GCSEs**.

The course provides an excellent foundation to study English Literature at A Level and beyond.

Students will experience a range of literature with a wide variety of appeal, including texts which have had significant influence on our English literary and cultural heritage.

You will be involved in a considerable amount of discussion, both in class and in small groups. In addition, you will have opportunities to go on a variety of visits to the theatre or places of literary interest.

**Wide personal reading is encouraged, and you will be expected to undertake a considerable amount of this, as well as pursuing your own interests, in order to broaden your response to texts.**



### Examination Details

**Paper 1** – 1 hour and 45 minutes  
Shakespeare and Post 1914 Literature (50%)

- **Shakespeare:** A two part question.
- **Post-1914 British play or novel:** One essay question.

**Paper 2** – 2 hours and 15 minutes  
19th century Novel and Poetry (50%)

- **19th century novel:** A two-part question
- **Poetry:**
  - One question comparing two poems from the collection.
  - One question comparing two unseen contemporary poems.



# ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

English as an Additional Language lessons form an important part of the EAL students' GCSE programme. Their EAL lessons are central to supporting their progress across the curriculum by developing their key English skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

EAL support is provided for all students who do not have English as a first language through timetabled lessons, which occur in place of a Modern Foreign Language. Within these EAL lessons, students are supported in their various subjects across the curriculum, with a key aim being to help the students achieve grades 9 to 4 in their English Language GCSE.

In addition, students are prepared for the Cambridge Assessment: English series of examinations. The level they are prepared for is dependent on their English level as assessed at the start of the academic year and based on the entrance examinations completed. As Ratcliffe College has recently become a recognised Cambridge Assessment: English examination centre, all students will now complete a Cambridge English qualification towards the end of each academic year.

These examinations are globally recognized and help students to prepare for the English qualifications they will need to gain in order to meet the English entrance criteria for university.



## Possible Course Details

**Cambridge English: C1 Advanced**  
Achieving an A grade in this will earn you 32 UCAS Tariff points.

- **Reading and Use of English** (1 hour 30 minutes)  
Tests your use of English with different exercises that show how well you can control your grammar and vocabulary.
- **Writing** (1 hour 30 minutes)  
You create two different pieces of writing, such as essays, letters/emails, proposals, reports and reviews.
- **Listening** (40 minutes)  
Tests your ability to follow and understand a range of spoken texts.
- **Speaking** (15 minutes)  
Tests your ability to communicate effectively in face-to-face situations.

**Cambridge English: B2 First for Schools**

- **Reading and Use of English** (1 hour 15 minutes)  
Understand a range of texts, including their organisation and show how well you can control your grammar and vocabulary.
- **Writing** (1 hour 20 minutes)  
Produce two pieces of writing. The first piece will be an essay of 140–190 words. For the second, you can choose from an article, email/letter, essay, review or story of 140–190 words.
- **Listening** (40 minutes)  
Show that you are able to follow and understand a range of familiar spoken material.
- **Speaking** (14 minutes)  
Students have to show how well they produce spontaneous spoken language.

A B2 First for Schools qualification shows that a student has the language skills they need to communicate in an English-speaking environment.

**Cambridge English: B1 Preliminary for Schools**

Students would usually write this exam in Year 9, however if they join the School in Year 10 there is the opportunity to write this examination if the student's English level is not yet at B2.

- **Reading and Writing** (1 hour 30 minutes)  
Show that you are able to read texts and understand the main points. Show that you can use vocabulary and structure, writing a story or letter of 100 words.

- **Listening** (36 minutes, plus 6 minutes' transfer time)

Show that you can understand the meaning of a range of recorded spoken material.

- **Speaking** (10-12 minutes)  
In this exam, you will take part in a conversation, asking and answering questions.

A B1 Preliminary for Schools qualification shows that a student has mastered the basics of English and now has practical language skills for everyday use.

# MATHEMATICS

The GCSE course builds upon the foundations laid in Key Stage 3 with a comprehensive Scheme of Work designed to cover the full syllabus while providing plenty of opportunities for investigative work and stimulating practical applications of Mathematics. The GCSE course will cover the following content headings, with the assessment weighting:

	Foundation Tier	Higher Tier
<b>Number</b>	25%	15%
<b>Ratio, Proportion &amp; Rates of Change</b>	25%	20%
<b>Algebra</b>	20%	30%
<b>Statistics &amp; probability</b>	15%	15%
<b>Geometry &amp; Measures</b>	15%	20%

The course is divided into smaller 'units' (consisting of a few chapters) and each 'unit' is assessed via a test with results being used to monitor your progress. As the GCSE examination approaches a comprehensive revision programme is undertaken, in which you will sit a series of past GCSE papers under examination conditions. You will also need to memorise many formulae. Whilst non-calculator methods are an important part of Mathematics teaching and, indeed, the GCSE examination will be assessed via a non-calculator examination paper, all students will need a scientific calculator for use at GCSE. We recommend the use of a Casio fx-85GTX.

## After GCSE

A minimum of a grade 7 at the Higher Tier will be necessary if you wish to study Mathematics in the Sixth Form. Approximately one third of Sixth Form students take Mathematics at A Level.

An A Level in Mathematics is a sought after qualification and highly regarded by many Higher Education Establishments and employers. Many students leave Ratcliffe to read Mathematics-related subjects in Higher Education.

## Examination Details

### Final Examination (100%)

There are written papers at two levels:

#### Higher Tier

**Paper 1** - 1 hour 30 minutes  
Non-calculator (33%)

**Paper 2** - 1 hour 30 minutes  
Calculator (33%)

**Paper 3** - 1 hour 30 minutes  
Calculator (33%)

#### Foundation Tier

**Paper 1** - 1 hour 30 minutes  
Non-calculator (33%)

**Paper 2** - 1 hour 30 minutes  
Calculator (33%)

**Paper 3** - 1 hour 30 minutes  
Calculator (33%)

- Each paper has 80 marks
- The content outlined for each tier will be assessed across all three papers
- Each paper has a range of question types; some questions will be set in both mathematical and non-mathematical contexts
- A formula sheet (with not many formulae) is given at the front of each examination paper





# MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Languages are at the heart of the curriculum at Ratcliffe College, providing students with an intellectually-stimulating and culturally-rich programme of study. French, German and Spanish are experienced at KS2.

Most students continue to study two modern foreign languages at KS3, selecting one or both of these for further study at GCSE level. In today's global job market, the ability to offer communicative skills in languages other than your own will be an invaluable asset, whichever career you decide to pursue.

If you have studied only one modern foreign language in Year 8, you will carry on with this language to GCSE. However, if you have been studying two languages in Year 8, you will continue with one of these at GCSE level; you may be able to continue with both languages. You may be able to take Spanish and German, depending on numbers.

You will develop your Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing skills through the study of five main themes:

- Identity and culture
- Local area, holiday, travel
- School
- Future aspirations, study and work
- International and global dimension

## After GCSE

We recommend that students achieve a minimum of a grade 7 at GCSE in their chosen language if they wish to pursue this at A level, however we will consider every case on an individual basis.

## Examination Details

**There are 4 components:**

**Unit 1** – Listening (25%) **Unit 2** – Speaking (25%)  
**Unit 3** – Reading (25%) **Unit 4** – Writing (25%)

**Foundation Tier:**

**Unit 1** – 35 minutes **Unit 2** – 21 minutes  
**Unit 3** – 45 minutes **Unit 4** – 1hour10 minutes

**Higher Tier:**

**Unit 1** – 45 minutes **Unit 2** – 24 minutes  
**Unit 3** – 1hour **Unit 4** – 1hour20 minutes

All components are marked externally. The speaking examination will be conducted by your teacher, then marked by external examiners.

You will be entered at Higher or Foundation tier in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. For Foundation tier, grades 1–5 are available and for Higher tier, grades 4–9 are available.

## French GCSE Syllabus

This course assumes that you have studied French in Year 8. You will have conversation classes with the French Assistant to help improve your accent and develop your speaking skills for GCSE.

You will use a variety of resources,

including the Studio Edexcel GCSE textbook, the Studio Edexcel GCSE Grammar and Translation workbook and 'ActiveLearn' (accompanying digital material) designed to help you meet the requirements of the Edexcel examination. In Years 10 and 11 you will be given the opportunity of going on a Homestay visit to France, typically Nice or Montpellier.



## German GCSE Syllabus

This course assumes you have studied German at least in Year 8. Everyone will be issued with the Stimmt Edexcel GCSE textbook and Stimmt Edexcel GCSE Grammar and Translation workbook and students will be given access to the web-based resource 'ActiveLearn'. These support materials are designed to help you meet the requirements of the Edexcel examination. You will also have conversation classes with the German Assistant to help improve your accent and develop speaking skills for GCSE. In Years 10 and 11 you will be given the opportunity to take part in a homestay visit to Germany, typically Berlin and/or the German Exchange with a school in Koblenz.

## Spanish GCSE Syllabus

This course assumes you have studied Spanish at least in Year 8. You will use a variety of resources, including the Viva Edexcel GCSE textbook, the Viva Edexcel GCSE Grammar and Translation workbook and the online learning tool 'ActiveLearn'; all of which have been designed to help you meet the requirements of the Edexcel examination. You will also have conversation classes with the Spanish Assistant to help improve your speaking skills.

In Years 10 and 11 you will be given the opportunity to take part in a Spanish Homestay visit, typically in Salamanca or Granada.

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES

By its very nature as a Catholic School, the study of Religion at Ratcliffe has always been at the core of the curriculum. At GCSE level, it continues to hold this position of importance, so everyone is required to study the subject at GCSE.

Religious Studies is an academic subject and the GCSE course will test your skills level in knowledge, understanding and evaluation. You will develop your ability to handle information and interpret evidence, to learn and deepen your understanding of the views of others and why they may behave in particular ways. You will become more aware of, and sensitive to, other people and hopefully grow in confidence and self-understanding.

You will study a range of issues under three main areas. The course has been approved by the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. The content of the whole course will comply with the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory published by the Bishops' Conference.

## There are three main areas of study

### Exam Board: EDUQAS (Route B)

#### Foundational Catholic Christianity:

- Origins and Meaning (Creation, Scientific views, Environment, Sanctity of life, Abortion)
- Good and Evil (What is evil? Catholic responses, Jesus and suffering, Conscience)

#### Applied Catholic Christianity:

- Life and Death (Catholic belief about resurrection and the afterlife, Funerals, Euthanasia)
- Sin and Forgiveness (What is sin? Crime and punishment, Beliefs about forgiveness)

#### The study of Judaism:

- Key Beliefs: God (One, Creator, Law-Giver), Life after Death, Sanctity of Life
- Covenant & Mitzvot
- Synagogue and Worship
- Family Life and Friends
- Festivals

In the course you will reflect upon your experience, your relationships and the world around you. It will also help you to explore deep questions, such as:

- Why am I here?
- Why do Christians believe in God?
- Do I have a soul?
- How should Christians relate to God and one another?
- Can abortion, capital punishment or euthanasia ever be justified?

Religious Studies will help you understand how people have dealt with these questions and issues.

In Year 10, all students will have the opportunity to visit the Holocaust Centre near Newark. This is a central part of the syllabus as well as being essential to the spiritual and moral development of all students. Each class will also prepare and take part in the celebration of a class Mass in both Years 10 and 11.

*Please note, students start the GCSE course in Year 9. Students beginning Ratcliffe in Year 10 will be given course notes and will be assisted in catching up.*

#### After GCSE

The course provides a good foundation for A Level Religious Studies which is comprised of Philosophy, Ethics and the study of Religion (Christianity).

Both the GCSE and the A Level in Religious Studies have strong cross-curricular elements, drawing for example, on the knowledge of History, Geography, Literature, Science, Art and Music.

An A Level in Religious Studies is a useful basis for any degree in Higher Education, and is especially relevant for courses in Theology, Philosophy, Social Science, English, Psychology, Education, Law and Politics.

## Examination Details

The course will be assessed by three externally assessed examinations; two 1 hour 30 minute examinations and one 1 hour examination. There is no coursework as part of the course.

#### Assessment

Students will be awarded a grade 9-1; grade 9 will be awarded to the very top achievers.





## SCIENCE: SINGLE AWARD

The content of Edexcel International GCSE Single Award Science is interesting and engaging for students but also provides a solid foundation for those continuing on with further vocational study or employment. There are opportunities to 'localise' the content to make it more relevant for students and question papers are clear and accessible for all students of all ability ranges and learning styles. Mark schemes are straightforward, so that the assessment requirements are clear.

Students' practical skills will be developed, and these skills will be assessed through questions in written examinations. Students are awarded one Edexcel International GCSE grade from 9-1.

The International GCSE Single Award Science course is an option for those students who find science particularly challenging and the decision of choosing the Single Award Science will be made by the Head of Science, in consultation with students and parents.

The Science Single Award course is taught using the same number of lessons as the Double Award course, providing more time for consolidation of theory, with the option of reducing the pace to the lessons when necessary.

The course is a reduced version of the Double Science Award course.

### Examination Details

**Biology** – Paper 1 (Untiered)  
70 minutes

**Chemistry** – Paper 2 (Untiered)  
70 minutes

**Physics** – Paper 3 (Untiered)  
70 minutes

## SCIENCE: DOUBLE AWARD

The Edexcel International GCSE in Science (Double Award) aims to impart a systematic body of scientific knowledge and facts, and an understanding of scientific concepts, principles, themes and patterns. Students will develop experimental skills based on correct and safe laboratory techniques, and will learn to form hypotheses and design experiments to test them.

This single-tier qualification is suitable for delivery in schools and colleges and is assessed via three papers – one each from Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students are awarded two Edexcel International GCSE grades from 9-1.

To help us understand and cope with many of the new developments in a modern scientific age, you need to study and try to understand some of the key areas of science itself. This science course covers many of these key areas involving Biology, Chemistry and Physics topics which are an important foundation in helping us to understand the world we live in. This will enable you to make more balanced and informed decisions; being more aware of important areas like keeping our bodies healthy, energy resources and space, and the way that chemicals can influence and shape our lives. By successfully completing the course, you will gain 2 International GCSE grades. This will also open up the opportunity for you to continue to A Level in any of the three specialist science subjects at 16+.

### Unique features and benefits of the specification

- Clear, detailed and comprehensive subject content with straightforward linear assessment
- Requires less curriculum time than teaching the three sciences individually

### Examination Details

The examination comprises Paper 1 from Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Single tier.

- Graded 9-1
- Students are awarded two International GCSE grades
- Provides a sound foundation for progression to A Level science specifications.

**Biology** – Paper 1 (Untiered)  
2 hours

**Chemistry** – Paper 1 (Untiered)  
2 hours

**Physics** – Paper 1 (Untiered)  
2 hours



## SCIENCE: TRIPLE AWARD

If you are already intending to specialise in the sciences at A Level, then it is possible for you to study all three of the sciences separately and obtain three separate IGCSEs. You cannot study just one or two; all three subjects must be studied together. By doing so, it allows you to cover a more in-depth course in preparation for studying science subjects at Sixth Form level.

You should only choose this option if you are a strong science candidate, as this course is more intensive than the Double Science course. You must seek the advice of your teachers before deciding to choose this option. You will be expected to achieve an A grade in your Year 8 assessments before choosing this course.

The course includes all the Double Science Award course content, plus additional content as follows:

### Biology

The nature and variety of living organisms; structures and functions in living organism; reproduction and inheritance; ecology and the environment; genetic applications.



### Physics

Momentum and Newton's laws; the turning effect of a force; sound; electromagnetism; analogue and digital waves; static charge; changes of state; specific heat capacity.

### Chemistry

Ionic, covalent and metallic bonding; the alkali metals; the halogens; gases in the atmosphere; salt preparations; chemical tests; chemical formulae, equations and calculations; energetics; rates of reaction; reversible reactions and equilibria.

### Examination Details

Summary of assessment:

- Externally Assessed
- Availability: June series
- Paper 1: maximum mark 120
- Paper 2: maximum mark 60

### Physics

- **Paper 1** (Untiered)  
2 hours
- **Paper 2** (Untiered)  
1 hour

### Chemistry

- **Paper 1** (Untiered)  
2 hours
- **Paper 2** (Untiered)  
1 hour

### Biology

- **Paper 1** (Untiered)  
2 hours
- **Paper 2** (Untiered)  
1 hour





# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Sport and Fitness are aspects that the Physical Education department seek to inspire in everyone, whether this is an activity for competition, or just to encourage a healthy lifestyle. We are able to offer an individual the opportunity to play in a team or an individual sport and learn many soft skills that these bring.

**The main sports are as follows:**

Term	Girls	Boys
Autumn	Hockey	Rugby
Spring	Netball	Hockey
Summer	Tennis Rounders Athletics	Cricket Tennis Athletics
Other possible activities available throughout the year	Badminton Dodgeball Fitness Training Orienteering Zumba Squash Volleyball Ultimate Frisbee Water Polo Archery Aqua Aerobics Basketball	

Our excellent facilities really help us to provide a broad range of activities. These include: Two floodlit, all-weather Astroturf pitches, newly synthetic Athletics track, 25m swimming pool, squash court, floodlit netball and tennis courts, rugby and football pitches, fitness suite, indoor and outdoor cricket nets. These facilities are used daily during curriculum PE and Games lessons and through our extensive co-curricular programme.

Ratcliffe students regularly test their skills against their fellow students and students from other schools, through the wide range of Inter-House competitions and the Inter-School fixtures. These fixtures may include A and B team matches, allowing as many students as possible the honour of representing their School. If selected, students are expected to play in school teams.



# PSHCE

All students in Years 9, 10 and 11 follow a Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education Programme. Over the past year, we have established an exciting and inspirational PSHCE Programme that is delivered through the fortnightly PSHCE lesson.

Each summer the PSHCE programme is reviewed and the full content is available by the end of August/early September. The programme can be located via the main School website.

Tutors and expert external speakers deliver the programme. This ensures that the sessions are interactive, informative and edifying. Whilst most sessions are tailored toward a specific age group, topics of significance have been delivered across the whole School, with individual sessions being adapted to ensure that they are age appropriate.

At set times during an academic year; whole weeks are dedicated to topics of importance, such as anti-bullying week in November, E-Safety Week and Children's Mental Health Week in February.

The whole programme is designed to cover 4 main themes consisting of Personal Well-Being, Economic Well-being, Higher Education and Citizenship. Additionally we incorporate all government requirements appertaining to both Relationship Sex Education, which became mandatory from September 2020 and Fundamental British Values.

## Whole School PSHCE Aims

- To help foster the Catholic ethos of the School.
- To assist students in developing awareness of their responsibility to themselves, others and the School.
- To foster a greater sense of security, co-operation and achievement at School.
- To help students explore their own performance, feelings, attitudes and values; thereby fostering the development of a positive self-image amongst the students.
- To work towards the improvement of each student's academic performance throughout all areas of the curriculum.
- To help students develop a greater sense of understanding and empathy towards other members of our School community.
- To encourage students to examine and evaluate their attitude towards important social issues.
- To prepare students for life after School in a time of increasingly accelerating social, moral and economic change.
- To increase awareness amongst our students on the worldwide stage and promote a caring and sympathetic approach to the plight of others less fortunate than themselves.







# Section 3

## Option Studies



This Section provides information on the GCSE Option Subjects.

Remember, ask your teachers for advice about your options.



## ART & DESIGN

Art and Design GCSE teaches you to become engaged in the creative process of art. You will become effective, independent learners, as well as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds. It is a demanding subject, but it is also very rewarding.

You are explicitly required to demonstrate clear drawing skills as well as written annotation throughout the course, so you should enjoy drawing, and be competent at it. You should also enjoy being creative and exploring different media, including painting, printing, sculpture as well as new media. Depth and breadth of study are also skills you will develop.

### Examination Details

The Portfolio and the Set Task are measured against these Objectives:

**A01 - Develop** ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.

**A02 - Refine** work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.

**A03 - Record** ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.

**A04 - Present** a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

Assessment is both formative and summative, with two major, full, interim marks given, one in June of Year 10, and the other in November of Year 11 before the final marks are generated at the end of the course. Your teacher will speak with you regularly about your progress, offer you advice and direction, and give you feedback, both written and verbal.

### Course Details

#### • Portfolio, 96 Marks, 60%

The portfolio consists of a sustained project, plus further explorations and investigations. It must contain evidence of two or more of the following titles: **Fine Art, Graphic Communication, Textile Design, Three Dimensional Design, Photography**. It begins on the first lesson in Year 10, and concludes in January of Year 11.

Students will need to explore the work of artists, and be able to express their ideas visually as well in written form using good subject vocabulary in the annotations that should pepper their sketchbooks. They will explore themes and develop their practical skills and ideas. A successful project must demonstrate a clear and thorough journey.

### After GCSE

Following a successful GCSE result, an obvious progression is to continue onto the full A Level. There are a large number of career paths and opportunities available to students who study Art, Craft and Design. If you wish to pursue a career within the creative industries, then a GCSE in Art and Design is advisable, if not essential.

Previous students have gone on to specialise in such areas as Architecture, Textile Design, Graphic Design, Film and Animation, Restoration, Fine Art and Interior Design, to name but a few.

This will include making test pieces, and will ultimately lead to the creation of a final piece which demonstrates a realisation of their intentions.

#### • Externally Set Task, 96 Marks, 40%

This unit begins in January of Year 11. Students will be issued with their exam paper, which consists of a series of starting points/themes. Choosing only one, they will have several weeks to develop their own project based on this.

The final piece, as with the Portfolio Unit, will be a realisation of their intentions and will be produced within 10 hours of supervised examination time. This takes place in their normal teaching room over two consecutive days. Evidence must be from one or more of the titles given above.





# COMPUTING

This qualification will build on the knowledge, understanding and skills established through the Computing elements of the Key Stage 3 programme of study. The content has been designed not only to allow for a solid basis of understanding but to engage learners and get them thinking about real world application and is a great way to develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills, which can be transferred to further learning and to everyday life.

Computing is a practical subject, with two-thirds of the course relying on investigation and programming. Specifically, students will use Python as the main programming language. Skills in problem-solving and systems analysis and design will be developed through project work.

## After GCSE

The skills developed at GCSE will be useful whatever AS/A2 Level or Higher Education courses you choose, especially those involving project work which demand problem solving and critical thinking. An understanding of coding/programming, and knowledge of its uses, is a skill that is increasingly in demand. Students who complete the GCSE in Computer Science can either move onto further study of Computer Science at AS/A2 (OCR H446) or the Cambridge International Examinations AS/A Level in IT (9626).

## Course Details

The Computer Science (J277) course from OCR gives students a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. In studying this course, students will:

- Develop their understanding of current and emerging technologies and how they work.
- Understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation
- Analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs
- Think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- Understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems
- Understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society
- Apply mathematical skills relevant to Computer Science.

## Course Details

The assessment consists of two written examinations and an externally moderated non-exam assessment.

### • Component 01 Computer Systems

Written paper: 1 hour and 30 minutes  
50% of total GCSE, 80 marks.

This component will assess:

- Systems architecture
- Memory and storage
- Computer networks, connections and protocols
- Network security
- Systems software
- Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology

### • Component 02 Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming

Written paper: 1 hour and 30 minutes  
50% of total GCSE, 80 marks

This component will assess:

- Algorithms
- Programming fundamentals
- Producing robust programs
- Boolean logic
- Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments

### • Component 03 Practical Programming

Although this carries no marks towards the GCSE, all students have to undertake a practical programming task(s), either to a specification or to solve a problem (or problems), to demonstrate their practical understanding of Component 2.



## DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

The study of Design and Technology seeks to prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. It helps students to be aware of, and learn from, wider influences on design and technology, including historical, social/cultural, environmental and economic factors.

The key aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to:

- Develop realistic design proposals as a result of the exploration of design opportunities and users' needs, wants and values.
- Use imagination, experimentation and combine ideas when designing.
- Develop the skills to critique and refine their own ideas while designing and making.
- Develop a broad knowledge of materials, components and technologies and practical skills to develop high-quality, imaginative and functional prototypes.
- Be ambitious and open to explore and take design risks in order to stretch the development of design proposals, avoiding clichéd or stereotypical responses.

### Course Details

The Edexcel GCSE (9–1) in Design and Technology consists of one externally-examined paper and one non-examined assessment component.

The theoretical content is divided into two sections: core content and material categories. The core content provides students with a breadth of study and the material categories provide students with a depth of study. All students must study the Core content plus at least one material category.

Students will also undertake a practical project as part of their non-examination assessment. The project will test students' skills in investigating, designing, making and evaluating a prototype of a product that will allow them to apply the skills they have acquired and developed throughout their study.

In Year 10, students will work through small projects to develop their working knowledge and skills before commencing their major project in Year 11 (50% of the final GCSE mark). In Year 11, students must complete a design and make activity, which is based around a theme provided by the examination board. Alongside these projects, students will study a structured syllabus. This will develop their theoretical understanding in preparation for their Year 11 examination (50% of the final GCSE mark).





## After GCSE

Design Technology is an excellent stepping stone into any design-related career, such as Product Design, Advertising, Marketing, Engineering, Architecture, Interior Design or Design Management.

Students can progress to degree level through either direct entry after A Levels or after a one-year Foundation Course in Art and Design.



## Examination Details

Assessment takes place at the end of the two year linear course.

**Written examination:** 50%  
100 marks

- **Section A: Core** - This 40 marks and contains a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions. There will be 10 marks of calculation questions in Section A.
- **Section B: Material categories** - This section is 60 marks and contains a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions. There will be 5 marks of calculation questions in Section B.

**Coursework:** 50%  
100 marks

Students are required to analyse a given contextual challenge from a range of three on an individual basis. The project must allow students to apply knowledge and understanding in a product development process to investigate, design, make and evaluate their prototype.

This project will require students to follow an iterative design process rather than a linear process requiring them to continually test, evaluate and refine ideas. The content and assessment criteria are set out in a linear format to show what is required at each stage of the total project, but following an iterative process students will do work on different stages at a variety of points thorough their project.

# DRAMA

The syllabus offers a broad and coherent course of study enabling students to explore various texts, develop a wide range of theatrical skills and apply them to create performances. The students will work collaboratively to generate, develop and communicate ideas as well as making informed choices in process and performance. Students will have the opportunity to reflect and evaluate their work and the work of others. There are plenty of opportunities to attend theatre trips and be supportive in House Drama and other Year group performances.

## Component 1 – Devising Theatre – 40%

Students have the choice of performing or creating design. The latter can be through lighting, sound, set or costume.

Students must devise a piece of original theatre in response to a stimulus using techniques of a theatre practitioner or the characteristics of a style of drama. The stimulus is set by the examination board and the materials will always consist of:

- A quotation
- A song
- A picture
- A concept or statement

Students will produce a portfolio of supporting evidence to support the research, creation and development of ideas. This can be an illustrative piece of work reflecting on sketches, photographs, storyboard and mood boards, and costumes and even digital media. This component is internally assessed by the drama teacher and externally moderated.

## Component 2 – Performing from a Text – 20%

Students will have the choice of performing or creating design. The latter can be through lighting, sound, set or costume.

Students will study and perform two extracts from a play text chosen by the drama teacher. This is assessed by a visiting examiner. Students will need to submit to the examiner a brief account (150 words) summarising their artistic intentions. This is merely used to assist the examiner in assessing the realisation of artistic intentions.

## Component 3 – Interpreting Theatre – written examination - 1 hour 30 – 40%

- Section A – Set Text: A series of questions on a set text. This will be studied in depth over a period of time with plenty of opportunities to acquire excellent written technique.
- Section B – Live Theatre Review. One question from a choice of two requiring analysis and evaluation of a live theatre production. Students will view a live theatre performance through acting techniques, design and the role of the director.

## After GCSE

With this course, students will be very well prepared to follow and develop their skills in communication, creativity and teamwork which are highly valued by employers. Students will be prepared to take A Level Drama.





# FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

Every day you will come to contact with food. It is essential for us all to maintain good health and well-being. Do you enjoy a practical challenge, cooking food and eating it, working independently and as part of a team, problem-solving, planning, designing, learning functions of ingredients, want to learn more about nutrition, healthy eating and learning vital life skills? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you should then consider taking Food Preparation and Nutrition.

Food Preparation and Nutrition will enhance your knowledge, understanding and skills that are required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. You will develop your understanding between theory and practice and apply this in practical sessions. The topics you will follow are:

1. General practical skills.
2. Food nutrition and health.
3. Food science.
4. Food safety.
5. Food choice.
6. Food provenance.
7. Food preparation and cooking techniques.

Initially, lessons will develop your knowledge, understanding and self-confidence in all aspects to do with food. The majority of the course will be delivered through preparation and making activities. You will work individually and in groups, investigating, adapting and changing recipes to familiarise and enhance your knowledge of ingredients.

You will further develop your knowledge of nutrition, health campaigns and current food safety procedures. You will develop your practical skills in the making of products and will become familiar with some industrial practices including sensory evaluation.

In September of Year 11, you will start working on your two pieces of non-examination assessment (NEA). A choice of tasks will be given to you that are set by the examination board. In Year 11 a large proportion of your time will be spent on the NEA. In the second part of the spring term and the summer term, prior to your GCSE examination, you will go through an intense revision programme in preparation for your examination in the summer.

## Practicals

The School will provide ingredients and equipment for practical and investigative work. A charge of approximately £2.00 per practical lesson will be added to your school bill at the end of each term. Food prepared and/or cooked in the practical lesson may either be consumed in the room (time permitting) or taken home.

Students are to provide their own ingredients approximately four times a term. Boarders will have their ingredients provided by the school if they wish; these must be ordered by 11:20am the Friday before the practical lesson. During the NEA students will be required to provide their own ingredients. Boarders can pre-order their ingredient requirements with the help of the department.

## Assessment Details

**Unit 1 (50%):** 1 hour 45 minutes

Written examination

- **Section A:** Multiple choice questions [20 marks]
- **Section B:** Five questions each with a number of sub questions [80 marks]

### Unit 2:

- **Task 1 (15%): Food investigation:** A written report with evidence of a practical investigation [1500 words-2000 words]. 10 hours.
- **Task 2 (35%): Food preparation and assessment:**  
Prepare, cook and serve 3 dishes within a single session of no more than 3 hours. You will also need to include a portfolio which should include photographic evidence. 20 hours.

## After GCSE

There are numerous degrees, careers and apprenticeships available if you wish to study Food Preparation and Nutrition. You may then wish to progress to a Diploma in Food Science and Nutrition in the Sixth Form.

The following areas are careers suggestions for the future:

- Food Technologist
- Tourism
- Retail
- Hospitality
- Teaching
- Catering
- Nutrition
- Nursing
- Dietetics



# GEOGRAPHY

Geography is a dynamic and academically challenging subject which explores the relationship between the Earth and its people. It looks at the characteristics of different places – what they are like, what life in them is like, how and why places are changing and how we can try and use places sustainably so that future generations might also be able to use them. Geography also looks at the processes taking place that shape our planet, such as plate tectonics, and how these processes affect people.

If you have an interest in the world around you then Geography is a good subject to choose. The subject is rapidly changing and the new GCSE syllabus takes a modern skills-based approach which includes extended writing, source interpretation, hypotheses-testing, data collection and analysis, decision-making, problem solving and ICT skills. You will learn to work both independently and as part of a team, and you will take part in fieldwork.

There will be opportunities to use ICT, from using Ordnance Survey maps online and Google Earth to developing presentations to deliver in front of classmates. DVD and video resources will be utilised where appropriate. Fieldwork will help develop an understanding of natural and human processes and there will be opportunities for on-site fieldwork, along with a compulsory 4-day field course at the end of Year 10. This is to allow for completion of essential fieldwork exercises that are written into the specification.

## After GCSE

The GCSE course provides a solid foundation for A Level Geography which is a popular Sixth Form option. Geography also has many links with other subjects - Business Studies, Economics, Physics, Chemistry, History, Environmental Sciences, Biology, and Languages but, looking to the future, it also offers job potential. A good knowledge of Geography often furthers a person's understanding of working situations and problems.

Many Universities now offer Geography courses combined with Business Management, Transport, Law, Agriculture, Banking, Planning, Leisure, Tourism and Recreation, to name but a few. Certainly, the study of Geography will equip you with an understanding of the fast-changing world in which you live. Geography is also one of the 'facilitating' subjects highly valued by the top universities, and in its own right can lead into a variety of interesting careers including management, finance and retail, leisure and tourism, environment and sustainability and planning/surveying.

## Course and Assessment Details

There are three units and examinations that make up the GCSE:

### Unit 1: Living with the Physical Environment (35%)

- Natural Hazards (tectonic hazards, extreme weather and global warming)
- UK Physical Landscapes (river and coastal landscapes, management of natural processes)
- The Living World (ecosystems, tropical rainforests, hot deserts)
- 90 minute examination, 88 marks

### Unit 2: Challenges in the Human Environment (35%)

- Urban Issues & Challenges (urban growth, change and sustainability)

- The Changing Economic World (the development gap and the UK's economy)
- The Challenge of Resource Management (resource management, energy issues)
- 90 minute examination, 88 marks

### Unit 3: Geographical Applications (30%)

- Issue evaluation (decision-making exercise with pre-release materials)
- Fieldwork (questions based on student's own and unfamiliar fieldwork)
- 75 minute examination, 76 marks





# HISTORY

History is about the most interesting thing in the world – REAL PEOPLE! If you like people, you should like History.

Apart from being interesting, History is very useful. Employers who see that you have a qualification in History know that you have taken on certain key skills which can be applied to all sorts of other situations. They know that:

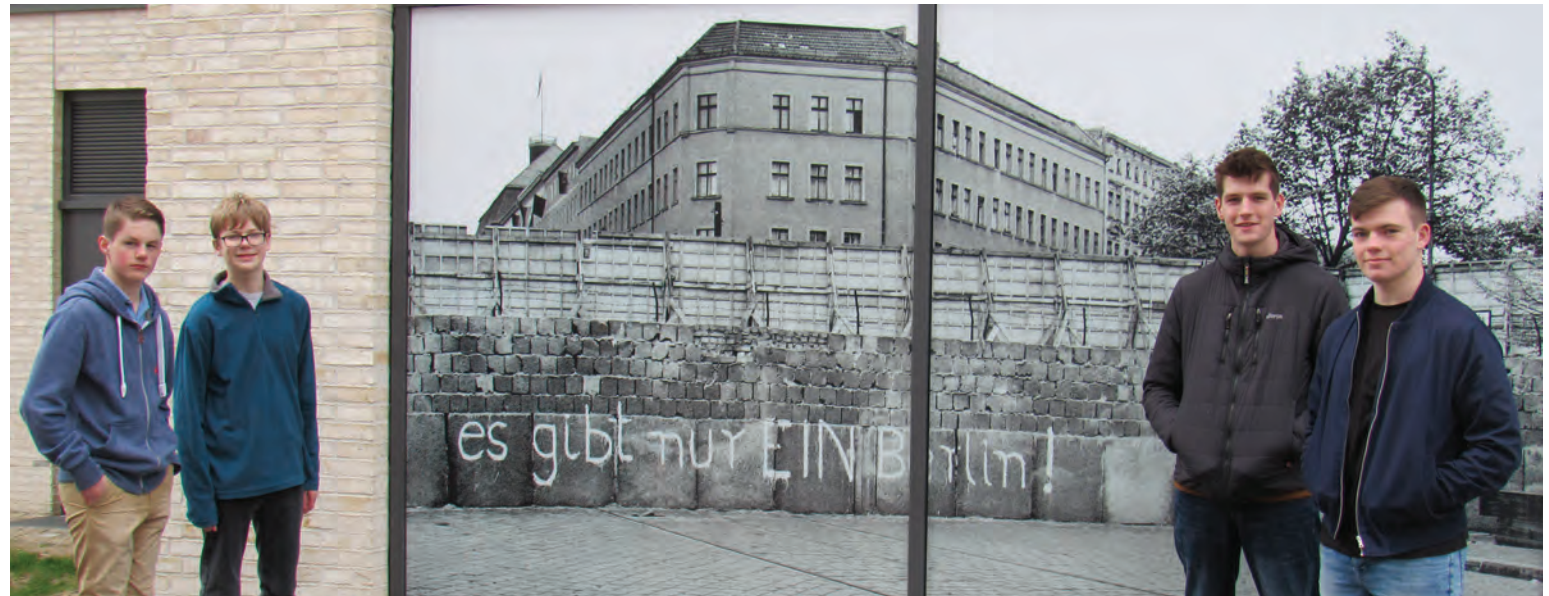
- You can understand people and what motivates them.
- You are able to gather and read different kinds of information, such as documents, pictures, cartoons and film.
- You are able to analyse and evaluate this information and can check for bias or propaganda or usefulness.
- You are able to communicate verbally and on paper and have learnt to explain your arguments effectively with supporting information.
- You can explain the causes and results of particular points of view and events.
- You understand how society and issues facing the world today have developed. It teaches you how and why the world came to be as it is today.
- History deals with big issues e.g. racism, power, war, politics, discrimination & terrorism.

Even if you are planning on being a scientist, History will be very useful to you. Remember that scientists have to communicate effectively, work with and manage other people. Scientific projects relate to the whole of society, so employers and universities like to see that you followed a balanced course at School. History is an important part of keeping that balance.

## After GCSE

The skills and awareness of world issues that GCSE History will teach you will be useful when applying to university or prospective careers. History also has very specific applications. The skills of a historian – for example arguing a case and analysing evidence, will be a great asset to those intending to be lawyers, journalists, publishers, accountants, police officers, T.V. researchers, managers, teachers and in a variety of other professions. History is also considered to be a facilitating subject by universities and a good reflection of your ability to perform higher order thinking skills.

The subject provides useful background knowledge and this provides a good basis for taking the subject at A Level.



## Course and Examination Details

The topics will be as follows:

- **Paper 1** - 1 hour 15 minutes  
British Thematic Study with Historical Environment. 52 marks. (30%)
- Thematic Study (20%) Warfare and British society, c1250 to the present
- Historical Environment (10%), London and the Second World War, 1939-1945
- **Paper 2** - 1 hour 45 minutes  
Period Study and British Depth Study. 64 marks. (40%)
- Period Study (20%) – Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91
- British Depth (20%) – Early Elizabethan England, 1558-88

- **Paper 3** - 1 hour 20 minutes  
Modern Depth Study. 52 marks. (30%)

- Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39

The teaching will provide you with the necessary knowledge, but also the skills you will need to be successful at GCSE. At the end of the course you should be able to develop a full understanding of the issues. You will do this by investigating historical problems and drawing your own conclusions.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Studying an IGCSE ICT will develop skills invaluable to you in other subjects and as you progress through your education. As computers are used nearly everywhere, competence in their use can be an entry requirement, or a pre-requisite, for careers in many fields - for example, in engineering, art and design, journalism, teaching and architecture.

As well as developing your skills in the use of many industry standard packages - Access, PowerPoint, Excel, Publisher, Word and Photoshop, you will improve your problem solving skills through the development of computer-based solutions to real world problems.

The Cambridge International GCSE aims to encourage the exploration and study of ICT in a variety of contexts: home, community, business, industry, recreation and education.

The course enables students to:

- Acquire and apply ICT skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts.
- Develop ICT-based solutions to address challenges and solve problems.
- Develop an understanding of ICT systems.
- Develop an understanding and awareness of current and emerging technologies.
- Develop an awareness of the legal, social, ethical and environmental consequences of the use of ICT systems for individuals, organisations & society.
- Recognise potential risks when using ICT and develop safe, secure and responsible practice.

Information Technology is a practical subject so most of the knowledge you require is developed through the use of the software packages. Skills in problem solving, systems analysis and design are developed through project work.

### After GCSE

The skills developed at GCSE will be useful whatever A Level or Higher Education courses you choose, especially those involving project work which demand problem solving and presentation skills.

Information Technology is available in the Sixth Form where you will build upon your knowledge to create realistic business solutions to given problems, as well as the coding necessary to complete a detailed project.

### Examination Details

The Cambridge International GCSE in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is assessed through a written examination paper and two practical examination papers.

**Paper 1:** Theory - 40%  
2 Hours. 100 marks.

**Paper 2:** Document Production, Data Manipulation and Presentations - 30%  
2 Hours 30 minutes. 80 marks.

**Paper 3:** Data Analysis and Website Authoring - 30%  
2 Hours 30 minutes. 80 marks.

## LATIN

### What does the Latin GCSE course involve?

This course will enable you to develop detailed knowledge and understanding of the language, literature and civilisation of the Romans. In addition, you will have opportunities to explore and discover wider elements of the Classical world.

### Language

During Year 9, you will study Book III of the 'Cambridge Latin Course', which introduces a range of sentence structures which are tested at GCSE. You will then learn the remaining elements of GCSE accidence and syntax through 'Latin to GCSE' Parts 1 and 2. You will then continue to learn the GCSE Defined Vocabulary List. At GCSE, language is examined by translating passages from Latin to English and by answering comprehension questions. There is also the opportunity to attempt translating from English into Latin for the first time.

### Literature

You will read and study original Latin literature when you are in Years 10 and 11 exploring the content, context, and style of the set texts by both prose and verse authors. Texts for GCSE in 2026 includes an account of Messalina, Emperor Claudius' third wife, from Tacitus' Annals and selections from Book 1 of Virgil's Aeneid.

### Cultural background

You will study various topics of Roman civilisation, including Roman Britain, the City of Rome, Roman entertainment, the structure of Roman Society and elements of philosophy and religion, this provides a cultural context for the study material.

### Why study Latin?

- You will read literature in its original form and understand how it has influenced the culture and writing of many civilisations the world.
- You will develop your grammar, enrich your vocabulary and writing in English.
- Support your studies of modern languages such as French, Spanish and Italian.
- You will develop your attention to detail and logical thinking, and gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the influence that the Romans have on modern culture.

### After GCSE

Latin is a subject which is highly regarded by universities, developing many of the academic skills required for studying subjects at A Level. Latin is offered as an A Level subject at Ratcliffe College.

### Examination Details

OCR GCSE Latin (9-1), J282, is assessed through three written examinations, all taken at the end of Year 11:

**Component 1:** Language, 1 hour 30 minutes, 50% of GCSE qualification

**Component 2:** Prose Literature, 1 hour, 25% of GCSE qualification

**Component 3:** Verse Literature, 1 hour, 25% of GCSE qualification

There are opportunities to develop your appreciation of the Classical world outside the classroom, through a variety of activities, trips and events.



# MEDIA STUDIES

The media involves areas such as film, television, radio, newspapers, magazines, video games, music video and increasingly, online forms of advertising and social media. These are obviously very important in today's world. Students will be expected to write in detail about these areas and also to be actively involved in practical tasks, which will be assessed individually (although group work can still take place). Students must be able to co-operate with others and would be required to carry out practical tasks, such as filming, photography and/or editing, outside of class time, in addition to more familiar prep tasks.

The syllabus is based on the following 'theoretical framework':

- Understanding of media texts and how they communicate meaning through media language.
- Understanding of media **audiences** and how and why they consume media products.
- Exploration of how the media **represents** the world around us.
- Knowledge of media **industries** and their working practices.

In addition, students will be expected to showcase:

- Technical skills e.g. image and video editing (for which they will receive training in the relevant software).
- Creativity in developing their own ideas for media products.

During the course, students must study a range of media. More specifically, they must be able to analyse closely a media extract (television crime drama) in an examination setting, and be able to understand both what the extract is communicating to the audience and the context of how it was made.

The study of the media broadens in preparation for the second examination, where students will have the opportunity to study the music business, and more specifically, music magazines, music videos and radio shows. In addition, students will gain an appreciation of the historical development of the media through an analysis of news, from the newspaper front pages of the 1960s, to the use of social media and participatory feeds today.

Students will also have the opportunity to produce their own media products and this to count towards approximately 30% of their final grade. They can work in either print or video media so the brief is tailored to support their individual needs. The department prides itself on producing some of the best student media productions in the country, so students experience great success in this area.

## After GCSE

The course will provide students with all the necessary skills to pursue the subject in more detail at A Level. It will also develop transferrable skills useful in analytical subjects, such as English, and in creative and/or technical subjects.

## Examination Details

### Non-examined assessment (30% Practical)

- Practical production based on briefs supplied each year by the examination board.
- Choice of:
  - Magazine extract
  - Website
  - Television sequence
  - Music video

### Examination 1: Television and Promoting Media (35%) 1 hour and 45 minutes

- Analysis of crime drama extract (viewed in examination), focusing on creation of meaning, appeal to audience and the institution which produced it.

- Questions based on the study of a set promotional campaign for a Hollywood film, and how this has operated cross media.

### Examination 2: Music and News (35%) 1 hour and 15 minutes

- Questions based on a study of the music industry, and the set products of a music magazine, two contrasting music videos and a mainstream radio show.
- Questions based on the study of news through the ages, with an understanding of how front pages from the 1960s compare to the online news we can access today.



# MUSIC

Music is an enjoyable subject which uses both practical and academic skills. If you have instrumental or singing lessons and are around Grade Three standard, you will be able to achieve very well as you continue to develop your practical skills alongside the classroom based activities. Taking part in school ensembles and concerts goes hand-in-hand and will enrich your experience. Students often say that Music is one of their most rewarding subjects at GCSE, although it is not an easy option! It needs dedication both inside and outside the classroom so that those who opt for it are completely immersed in enjoyable music-making.

You will learn how to improve your performing skills and through your work in composing, you will gain an insight into how music is constructed from initial ideas through to the finished product. You will also learn how to analyse music in a variety of styles and discover the social and historical context in which music has been composed over the last 400 years or so. There will be considerable emphasis on independent learning: composing, practising, background reading and listening.

## After GCSE

GCSE Music will obviously be important for those intending to do A Level Music and for those who later wish to become professional performers or composers. In addition, Music is advantageous if you are hoping to seek your career in teaching, dance, drama, religious education, physics, English and languages.

If you are a practical musician, able to sing or play to at least Grade 5 standard, and have a sound knowledge of music theory, then you have fulfilled the basic entrance requirements for the advanced course.

The course covers Solo and Ensemble Performing, Composing, and Listening and Appraising. There are four Areas of Study:

1. Instrumental Music 1700-1820
2. Vocal Music
3. Music For The Stage and Screen
4. Fusions



## Examination Details

### Unit 1 - Performing (30%)

One solo and one ensemble performance. Recordings are made of both performances, which are then internally assessed under controlled conditions and externally moderated. Recordings may be made at any point during the course.

### Unit 2 - Composing (30%)

Two compositions and/or arrangements or one of each. Internally assessed under controlled conditions and externally moderated. The compositions submitted will represent the best of your work produced during the course. Compositions must be recorded and notated as a score or a detailed written annotation.

### Unit 3 - Listening and Appraising (40%)

Written paper lasting 1 hour 45 minutes, which is externally set and assessed. Questions in the examination relate to the set works from each Area of Study, as well as one unfamiliar piece of music.

## Assessment Timetable

Performing and Composing assessment sheets, together with candidates' scores and CDs must be completed by the end of the Spring Term in Year 11. They will be marked by the School, before being sent off for moderation.



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Would you like to understand the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle?

Would you like to develop your skills, analyse them and improve your performance?

Would you like to improve your knowledge of the workings of the human body?

Would you like to develop your understanding of the different factors that affect performance and participation?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then GCSE PE may be for you.

## **Practical performance** (40% assessment)

The practical element of the course is worth 40% and we will submit your best marks for three activities: one team sport and one individual activity and either a second team or individual activity.

You need to be representing the School in at least two of the major Games and ideally you should be in the A group for your Games lessons. You will be assessed in your Games lessons in:

Girls - Hockey, Netball, Tennis, Athletics  
Boys - Rugby, Hockey, Cricket, Athletics

Depending on the make-up of the group in your GCSE PE lessons you could also be assessed in:

- Athletics
- Badminton
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Basketball

If you regularly compete in another sport outside of school and are of county standard, in a sport that is on the AQA approved list, this could also be assessed

e.g. squash or golf. In addition, if you go on the School ski trip you can be assessed for this sport. If you wish to be assessed in a sport outside of school we require a full match along with all skills listed in the criteria recorded and submitted as evidence.

You will be assessed in your ability to demonstrate a range of skills and tactics in a variety of situations. You will also have to carry out an evaluation on yourself and write an action plan to improve performance.

## **Theory** (60% assessment)

2 written papers, 1 hour 15 minutes each

### Component 1

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Use of data

### Component 2

- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences e.g. drugs, media, sponsorship, international sport
- Health, fitness and wellbeing
- Use of data

Each question paper will include a mixture of multiple choice questions, short answer questions and some extended writing questions

## **After GCSE**

You have two opportunities to study Physical Education and Sport beyond GCSE in the sixth form. We offer a BTEC and A Level programme that you can choose from, please seek advice from your teachers about which course to follow and any entry requirements.









# Section 4

## Life Beyond the Classroom



This section provides you with information about life beyond the classroom. It outlines some of the main co-curricular opportunities which exist for our GCSE students. Remember, we want to develop your interests and abilities outside of the classroom as well.

It is important for you to have a balance between your academic life and co-curricular activities. At Ratcliffe, we aim to provide you with an 'all-round education' - so make sure you make the most of the opportunities presented to you!

We would expect everyone to participate in at least one co-curricular activity each term.

# Activities Available at Ratcliffe College

## Chaplaincy Group

The group members work together with the guidance of the Chaplaincy Team to use their talents in music, art, drama, dance and communication skills to enhance and enrich the liturgies and services. In particular, you will help to organise the School Masses and Assemblies.

There will also be plenty of opportunities to give your time in the service of others both at school and in the local community. Students are also encouraged to help fundraise for local and overseas charities. It is a wonderful opportunity for you to make a contribution to the spiritual life of the School.



## Drama

For those who have an interest in Drama, there is always a lot going on. Productions take place in nearly all Year groups and all students are welcome to help backstage, even those who are not studying Drama as a GCSE subject.

The productions may be whole Year groups or small groups for pantomimes and Theatre in Education tasks. In addition, we offer plenty of challenging workshops such as lighting, sound, stage lighting and the style of pantomime. All productions, whatever their size, require a cast, a lighting and sound technical crew.

Students may study Lighting and Sound as part of their GCSE syllabus if they choose not to perform on stage. The skills of the theatre are skills that can be used well beyond school and all students can take advantage of the busy drama programme to make a valuable contribution. Everyone has a hidden talent – this may be your chance to find yours!



## Media

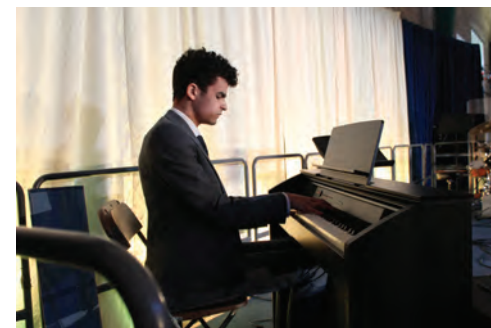
The Media Department is open every lunchtime and during most prep times to offer advice and resources to Media Studies students, to assist them with their practical productions. The aim is to secure wider online distribution for the best examples of work. There are also opportunities to contribute to the wider life of the School through School Photography Club, Preparatory and Senior, where students assist in recording weekly events and also develop skills in effective photography and image manipulation. Film Club remains very popular, enabling students to view and discuss films from different genres.

## Music

There are plenty of opportunities to enjoy making music whether you are studying music or just want to do so for enjoyment; students are encouraged to take part!

- If you would like to learn to play an instrument, lessons are offered for piano, organ, voice, woodwind, brass, strings, guitar and drums.
- The Senior Choir sings a wide range of music and, in addition to concert performances, we prepare music for assemblies and special services.
- The Senior Orchestra, Newman Orchestra and Swing Band offer the opportunity for instrumentalists to perform a varied and often challenging programme of music.

- The Brass Group, Woodwind Ensemble, Guitar Ensemble, Chamber Ensemble and the Piano Duet Club also cater for instrumentalists of all ages and abilities who wish to get involved in the musical life of the school.
- Workshops from visiting musicians allow students to follow their own interests, be it performing, composing, music ICT or music theory.
- In addition to ensemble work, the Music Department offers opportunities for soloists to perform at many school functions.



## Clubs and Societies

There are many clubs and societies that operate in School. Activities on offer vary each term according to the particular expertise of staff or the particular interests of students. For example, opportunities have existed recently for students to write for a school newsletter, develop their arts, stitching and craft skills, to play chess or table tennis, to practise golf at the nearby driving range and Par 3, or to watch films of different genres.



# Activities Available at Ratcliffe College

## The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award can offer you the chance to participate in a range of interesting, challenging and worthwhile activities. You could become an actor, lead other students across the countryside, score goals for your county, spend a week on the high seas, or make a real difference to the lives of others.

You are encouraged to develop your existing interests and to try new ones; the opportunities are endless! In Year 10, you can complete your Bronze Award and then progress to the Silver Award in Year 11, laying the foundations for the Gold Award in the Sixth Form. In taking part in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, you will learn by experience the commitment, enterprise and effort required for success.

You will discover a great deal about yourself and come to appreciate the enjoyment of working with, and for, other people. Currently, there are over 150 candidates taking part in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award at Ratcliffe.



## Combined Cadet Force (CCF)

The CCF has an army and RAF section. Open up new and exciting challenges for yourself, take on positions of responsibility and develop your leadership skills.

These are just a few of the opportunities available to you if you join the CCF. You may become involved in learning how to operate a store and other administrative tasks, or plan and take lessons on the recruit or advanced courses.

The CCF can be linked into your Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme as many of the skills overlap. It is also possible for Senior Cadets to further enhance their experience through a BTEC National Diploma Award.

Throughout the year, there are opportunities to participate in hill walking, rock climbing, canoeing, sailing and other skills such as flying, military exercises, First Aid and the use of radios, to name but a few. There are also regular Field weekends and outdoor adventure camps as well as the CCF summer camp in July to look forward to.

The Combined Cadet Force is not just for those interested in a military career - it is for everyone.

## Sport and Games

Once lessons have finished, there is plenty for you to get involved with. Physical Education also plays an important part in the co-curricular programme. A major emphasis of the co-curricular programme is the pursuit of excellence and school representation in the major sports teams, which include rugby, boys' and girls' hockey, netball, cricket, football, tennis, rounders, swimming and athletics.

Ratcliffe has a strong reputation for the quality of its sports teams and all students are encouraged to join in. Practices take place after school, with inter-school fixtures on Saturday mornings and afternoons, and mid-week matches.

In addition, we try to offer a wide range of activities for you to enjoy, including squash, badminton, basketball, trampolining, use of the fitness suite and swimming training. There is also the opportunity to take up Golf and Fencing. Whether or not you are a beginner, an expert or keen to learn and improve, you are welcome to try any or all of the activities.

It is a well-established fact that physical exercise is extremely beneficial for those who wish to succeed in their studies, and the facilities at the school allow plenty of opportunities for students to get involved with the busy sporting programme.



# Activities Available at Ratcliffe College

## Co-Curricular English Activities

As well as pursuing your choice of subjects from the combination of English and related subjects, there is a possibility to take part in a range of other activities. Theatre trips play a significant part in the life of the English Department, and you will have the opportunity to take part in various workshops from time to time.

Debating is offered as an increasingly popular activity and, for those who are interested in Public Speaking, there are various external competitions, which the School is invited to enter. We are always looking for willing participants.

There is also the chance to develop your interest in reading and writing through lunchtime clubs. There are Book Clubs for every age group which provide a lively arena for discussion.



## House Competitions

Students are allocated to a House when they join the School. Each House is overseen by a House Guardian who is a member of the teaching staff. They are assisted by two House Captains – students in Year 13.

The main purpose of the House system is to provide the structure for an annual competition for house points, in various activities. Competitions of an academic, sporting and artistic nature take place throughout the school year, and there are several fun events, such as the House Drama, House Music, Sports Day, House Swimming, House Mastermind and the House Pancake Races, to name but a few.

These competitions all count towards the House Shield, which is awarded annually.



## CREST (Creativity in Science and Technology)

The CREST scheme allows students to pursue their interest in science through a programme of research and presentation. It encourages students to find creative scientific solutions to problems that they want to investigate. Not only is this an interesting activity, it also helps students to develop the skills they need in their study of science, particularly in terms of how they approach coursework at GCSE and A Level.

The scheme has three levels – Bronze, Silver and Gold – and the amount of research time required increases at each level. It is available for all students in the Senior School, but the Gold Award is primarily for Sixth Form students.

## Voluntary Service

The School is keen to encourage students to involve themselves with its voluntary service programme, reinforcing the message that service to others is also of benefit to those who serve. Many students give their free time to help others, both within the School community and beyond. Some students provide assistance for staff and younger children in the Nursery School and the Preparatory School, through the St Vincent De Paul Society.



# Boarding at Ratcliffe College

Boarding is at Ratcliffe's Heart and Soul. Boarding lies at the heart of our school, literally as well as metaphorically, while its diversity and community spirit portray the essence or soul of Ratcliffe College. Ratcliffe has a long history of Boarding which has taken many different forms over the years. We are a thriving boarding community where every individual is nurtured to achieve to their potential.

## Boarding Options and Fees

### Full Boarding

Full boarders stay seven nights a week. There are no exeat weekends so full boarders can stay every night throughout the term. This does not mean that you can't go out and visit friends and family though, as long as all the permissions are granted.

The majority of our Boarders are full boarders and there are lots of activities which take place on Friday evenings, Saturdays, and Sundays. The Weekend Programme is full and varied, and it caters to the interests of the boarders – there are trips up to museums and galleries, sporting activities such as bike-riding and Kayaking, pottery painting, paintballing, ice-skating, Christmas markets, city visits and many more.

### Weekly and Regular Boarding

You may decide to dip your toes into boarding by starting with Weekly or Regular Boarding. As you move through the school and grow in confidence and independence, you might then choose to board more often, so that you can share the boarding experience with your friends and spend more time on your co-curricular interests.

Weekly boarders can stay for five nights a week. You can choose to come in on a Sunday or a Monday. For those playing school fixtures on a Saturday, it is good to stay on a Friday night so that you are in school on Saturday morning. Weekly boarding is becoming increasingly popular with families who live in the surrounding areas. It means that you can get the most out of the educational and co-curricular opportunities from Monday to Friday, and then return home to other friends and family at the weekends. You are, of course, very much part of the school community and receive the same level of care, opportunity, and accommodation as those who are full boarders.

As a Regular Boarder you can stay at school for one to four nights per week – you have a dedicated space in the house where you can leave your possessions even when you are not staying overnight. You can also choose to board, if space allows, when there is a weekend activity in which you want to take part.



### Occasional Boarding

Occasional boarders come and stay when they need to. They can stay for one night or several, booking in through the main reception at school. Beds are limited though, so it is worthwhile booking well in advance.

This option is offered to all students at Ratcliffe College. If space in the houses allow, day students can come and stay with us on a more ad-hoc basis. It's a great service for busy family life and those unforeseen circumstances that can crop up.



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