

# **WESTCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

**FOUNDATION GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
SCIENCE & ENGINEERING COLLEGE**



**SIXTH FORM**

**A LEVEL COURSE OUTLINES**

**SEPTEMBER 2010 ENTRY**

# **MISSION**

**Our intention is to develop the full academic  
potential of every student**

**so that they can become well-informed,  
responsible, self-reliant**

**and confident adults, ready to play a full role  
in all aspects of society.**

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# INTRODUCTION

## **Introduction**

We know the choice of school and subjects for Advanced level is, for many of you, the first time you will have been given a real voice in your own education. We believe that our sixth form offers a centre of academic excellence which will help you to acquire maturity, confidence, skills and good examination results. These will open further doors of opportunity to Higher Education and worthwhile careers.

### **Admission**

Our students come from a variety of backgrounds and schools but they share a desire to learn which makes this sixth form a stimulating and friendly place in which to spend your next two years of education. We accept boys as well as girls into our sixth form.

In order to ensure your eventual success in the courses we offer, you will need to start from a sound foundation of knowledge. For this reason we have a number of entry requirements which are listed in our admissions policy below.

### **Admission to Sixth Form at Westcliff High School for Girls**

#### **Admission Arrangements for Year 12 Entry and Transfer from Year 11**

The offer of a place in the Sixth Form at Westcliff High School for Girls is dependent on meeting the general entry requirements and relevant subject grades.

#### **1. INTERNAL APPLICANTS**

- 1.1 Places are available to all our own Year 11 pupils who would like to join our Sixth Form and meet the Admissions Criteria for entry.

#### **2. ADMISSIONS CRITERIA**

- 2.1 All applicants must attend an advisory interview with a senior member of staff to help them select an appropriate course.
- 2.2 All applicants must return a completed options form.
- 2.3 All applicants must meet the individual requirements for any subject they wish to study as detailed in the sixth form Course Outlines Booklet.
- 2.4 All applicants must be able and willing to study a minimum of four subjects at AS level plus an AS level in General Studies in Year 12 and to study at least three subjects at A Level, plus an AS Level in Critical Thinking in Year 13.
- 2.5 Applicants will not be accepted for entry if, once the timetable is constructed, they can not study at least four subjects plus General Studies.
- 2.6 All applicants must have at least a grade C in Mathematics and English and achieve a total of at least ten points in eight GCSE examinations. (A\* = three points, A = two, B = one), (short courses equate to half a GCSE and half the points).

Points may also be gained from Applied GCSEs and intermediate level GNVQs. A double award Applied GCSE equates to a single award full course GCSE. A double award intermediate GNVQ gains two points for a distinction and one point for a merit. All Level 2 BTEC Certificates and Diplomas gain 2 points for a distinction and 1 point for a merit. All multiple award vocational qualifications will count as one of the eight GCSEs when working out the points total.

### **3. EXTERNAL APPLICANTS**

The number of external students accepted varies from year to year according to the number of Year 11 students from Westcliff High School for Girls expected to take up places. The formal statement says the planned Admissions number is twenty five but this is a minimum figure and the School regularly exceeds this number. There is a limit to the numbers of boys we can accept as there is no intention to significantly alter the character of the school. The schools published admissions number for those being admitted to the school for the first time is twenty five.

- 3.1 All applicants must attend an advisory interview with a senior member of staff to help them select an appropriate course and offer them guidance on completing the entry form.
- 3.2 On receipt of applications a reference will be requested from the student's current school, to include estimates of GCSE grades. Offers will be made directly to students where the estimated grades justify this. Where estimated grades do not suggest suitability for our Sixth Form, applicants will be notified at once.
- 3.3 Where more external applicants successfully meet the Admissions Criteria than there are places, the oversubscription criteria in Section 4 will apply.
- 3.4 The normal closing date for applications is the end of the autumn term. Applicants receiving offers will be expected to confirm acceptance within four weeks and no later than the February half term holiday. Changes to subject choices will be possible after confirmation only if there are vacancies in subject groups. All those holding offers will be expected to attend the Sixth Form Induction Programme at the end of June.
- 3.5 The number of external applicants may exceed the published admissions number when there are places available on each of the subjects an applicant wishes to study.

### **4. OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA FOR EXTERNAL CANDIDATES**

Preference will be given on the following basis:

- 4.1 The best eight GCSE examination score achieved by the applicant.

In the event that a decision cannot be reached, the overriding tie-breaker will be distance from home to school measured in a straight line between the pupil's home and the nearest pupil entrance to the school.

You will also need to check the requirements for the particular subjects you plan to take here; in most cases you will need to have attained a minimum of a B grade if you have studied the subject previously. You will find an outline of the course of study for each subject and the entry grade required in this booklet which is designed to help you choose your course.

## **Your course of study**

We expect our students to choose four subjects taking AS examinations in all of them and in General Studies in Year 12 and in Critical Thinking in Year 13. Many students will then reduce to three subjects and take the second part of the A Level exam in these three at the end of Year 13. However, there are several other possible arrangements to suit individual tastes. If you are bright and hardworking it is quite possible to study four subjects to Advanced level, indeed about 30% of the sixth form do this. If you are attracted by a wide range of subjects then it is sometimes possible to pick up an AS in another subject during your second year and add it to the three subjects you wish to continue to Advanced level.

## **AS Level Courses and Examinations**

AS exams are close to GCSE in style although still covering A Level content. This is intended to make the transfer between GCSE and A Level easier and to cut down the number of students nationally who drop out of A Level courses. A student may resit a unit if required. Year 12 and 13 option blocks are arranged so that a student can study a new AS level alongside their A Level courses. This gives the potential for greater flexibility in your choice of course.

## **AS Critical Thinking /General Studies/Extended Project**

Students must take General Studies in Year 12 unless they are studying five subjects at AS or A Level Mathematics. It involves a lighter workload than other A Level subjects and is taught for 3 hours a fortnight in comparison with the 9 hours for all other subjects. Students are expected to study Critical Thinking in Year 13, which provides an academically challenging support to their A2 courses. We can also offer The Extended Project in Year 13 to a limited number of students. This is an opportunity to take an area of their A Level courses and develop it, producing a 5,000 word dissertation or an artefact/performance and 1,000 words.

## **Structure of the Sixth Form Years**

You will find the pace of Year 12 is faster than your GCSE course and you need to be well organised from the very beginning of it. Teaching of A2 units takes longer and it is essential that the first A2 module is well under way by the end of Year 12. Your first AS examinations in some subjects are likely to be in the January of Year 12 and the remainder in the summer. You must achieve the equivalent of at least a D Grade in the first year of the course to start the second year. Students who are not able to start three A2 courses in Year 13 will be asked to leave the Sixth Form. In January of Year 13, you will probably be doing some A2 modules and possibly some re-sits of AS modules.

## **Application Forms**

Year 11 pupils already at Westcliff must complete the Options form given to them in the Spring Term.

Students applying from other schools should complete the blue Course Selection Request Form and return it to the Head of Sixth Form as soon as possible. He will arrange a guidance interview. Application Forms will be discussed and distributed at the meeting with the Head of Sixth Form.

In 2009 the Sixth Form was oversubscribed and those applying late were not accommodated. Students are advised to return forms as soon as they can.

## **Guidance on choice of subjects**

We offer a wide range of AS and A Levels, but concentrate particularly on those which are valued by employers and universities. Our modern world needs creative, independent, self-motivated workers whose knowledge, ability, initiative and confidence will make them flexible enough to succeed in a variety of situations. In the past few years it has become increasingly common to break the traditional barrier between art and science and to choose a course which spans both areas. If you are currently unsure about your choice of subjects do not worry as this will be the basis for discussion in your interview with the senior member of staff who will be able to offer you guidance and further information.

You may be considering starting a new subject, such as Psychology or Government and Politics, and if so we advise you to talk to the appropriate staff about the subject at our Open Evening in the autumn term.

**COURSE OUTLINES  
SEPTEMBER  
2010**

## **ART & DESIGN**

**Board: Edexcel**

**Specification number: 3690**

**Requirement: Grade A or A\* at GCSE or a portfolio that reflects a similar standard in the view of the department.**

The Creative Industries represent an increasingly large and influential section of modern life and the U.K. is a world leader in innovative and inventive design. From the sculptures of Antony Gormley to the high fashion of Stella McCartney, from the controversy of Tracy Emin to the comedy of Nick Park; aesthetics, communication, problem-solving, ideas, individuality, confidence, visual awareness, independence –these are the key skills that lead to success in “Art and Design”.

At Advanced level students work in projects or units very similar to GCSE, they research, investigate and analyse visual phenomena in even more depth than they explore their own creativity through the development of ideas and the production of their independent artwork.

Recent changes to the specification for Advanced level Art encourage the use of a much wider range of contemporary approaches and we now have Fine Art students exploring film, animation and digital media as vehicles for their expression.

The courses at AS and A2 each require one coursework unit and one externally set (examination) unit. The two units account for 60% and 40% respectively of the marks for each level.

If you have a genuine enthusiasm for Art and a commitment to achieving the best you can, we have the ability to support you in your quest for success in this subject.

## BIOLOGY

**Board: OCR Syllabus Code: H021 H421**

**Required qualifications: Grade B GCSE Maths and Grade B GCSE Core Science, Grade A in Additional Science or Grade B GCSE Biology and Grade B GCSE Chemistry**

In your time technology has advanced rapidly and new issues appear everyday for you to consider, explore and decide where you stand. Take BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalitis), genetically modified organisms, gene therapy and the advances in the diagnosis, treatment and cure of many diseases. How well equipped are you to make an informed decision? These are not issues just for scientists, they are issues for everyone.

Biology is an exciting and challenging course aimed at students who are inquisitive, enjoy the broader aspects of biology and enjoy problem solving. Many skills that you already have will be developed further. Biology relies on clear and concise communication so your written and oral presentation skills will be developed. The course covers all aspects of biology with an emphasis on the application of the subject in the present and future.

Advanced level does differ from GCSE in that the problem solving element is expanded with you applying your knowledge to new situations. The pace of A Level lessons is greater than that at GCSE, so you are expected to supplement your notes and learning from lessons, in your own time, via textbooks or science magazines. You are given the opportunity to subscribe to Biological Science Review (£12 for 4 magazines) which is a magazine that supports both AS and A2 units.

Since September 2008, the AS and A2 Biology course have changed due to new directives from QCA. The content of the course covers topics such as Cell Biology and division, processes within the human body including enzyme activity, healthy lifestyles focussing on health and disease in humans, as well as studying the interactions in habitats and how humans have affected our world.

For both AS and A2 there is assessed practical based work and the skills associated with this. You will be assessed on these during the normal course of lessons as well as in formalised assessment sessions.

This type of assessment is in line with that already experienced through the new GCSE introduced in September 2006 and therefore the transition with regards to practical skills should be less daunting.

All students complete an intensive residential course in ecology at Flatford Mill Centre, Suffolk. This is compulsory for all students who wish to continue to A2 Biology. The cost of the trip is approximately £300.00. This is an excellent opportunity to carry out your own investigations in the field and to be tutored and advised by experts. Application of statistical tests is a major part of the field work investigations.

Three modules are studied for AS level and assessment is via two written examinations and assessment of investigative and practical skills throughout the year as well as in formalised sessions set by the exam board. For A2, a further two modules are studied and these are assessed by written examination.

Our aim is to develop your skills so that you become a confident and independent learner. We are aware that some of you may feel daunted by this but we are here to help and support you throughout this process.

Biology does not need to be supported by other scientific A Levels although there is some overlap with Chemistry, Geography and Psychology. The skills you learn during the course will be useful and beneficial in many careers, for example biotechnology, molecular biology, veterinary science, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, engineering, sports science, biochemistry, marine biology, medicine, dentistry, optometry and neuroscience .

## **BUSINESS STUDIES**

**Board: AQA Specification Number: Overall Code reference: 2130.**

**Required Qualifications: You need not have any experience of this subject but if you have studied GCSE Business Studies or GCSE Economics, you are required to have obtained a grade B.**

Business Studies is about learning the different combination of skills required to run a business. It has both an academic and vocational slant to it. It is therefore a popular A Level choice which goes well with many other subjects such as Psychology, Languages, Science or Art.

The difference between Business Studies and Economics is essentially one of outlook. For example, events in the world such as the Iraq crisis and the consequent increase in defence spending would be looked at in Business Studies in terms of its effects on business' markets and suppliers, ie looking at events from the business person's point of view. In Economics the broader view would be taken, looking at for example the reduction in Government spending in health care which now may be necessary. Business Studies is more interested in how the inputs of business can be organised and managed, in order to empower the business with the flexibility and dynamics needed. In this subject, we study the variables that influence the business internally and externally. Internal factors include personnel management (now called Human Resources), financial management, marketing and planning.

The main requirements for the course are an interest in business and commerce and a willingness to research using the internet, library and newspaper articles. Modern information and communication technology is an important tool in business. In the course you will learn why and how it is used, as well as developing your own ICT skills. The course is of a practical nature and you will also be working with real world case studies involving collecting, calculating and handling data. In Business Studies lessons you will be taking part in discussions and will be expected to undertake presentations. Extensive exam practice is an integral part of student assessments, to enable students to practice key exam skills and techniques and become more effective in their written work.

Partnerships are being established between the department and local firms. Visits to and speakers from these firms will form part of the course so that theory can be tested against actual practice. In the past we have also visited Barcelona, Amsterdam and Prague in Europe to see businesses that operate at an international level.

The career opportunities are wide and varied – from marketing, finance (financial or management), human resources or indeed management science or a combination of one of these with another speciality, (eg marketing and design or HR and behavioural psychology). One would expect to join an organisation, having studied this at degree level, at a junior level in management.

### **Trips and costs**

1. A voluntary trip organised for all students in the department may occur in year 12 or 13, costing approximately £500 for an 8 or 9 day trip abroad in Europe.
2. A Voluntary student conference on exam preparation for AS or A2 costs approx £20 entry fee and the train fare to London.

## CHEMISTRY

**Board: OCR Specification A (Specification Number H034/H434)**

**Required qualifications: Grade B GCSE Mathematics and either Grade B in GCSE Core Science and Grade A in GCSE Additional Science or Grade B in GCSE Chemistry.**

- **Why study chemistry?**

Chemistry is an exciting and fascinating subject which plays a crucial part in our society's health and prosperity. The UK's chemical industry has been outstandingly successful and earns millions of pounds each year for the UK economy. Studying chemistry at AS or Advanced level will enable you to develop the skills and knowledge required to take your chemistry to a higher level, to form a foundation for the study of related subjects or to equip you in part for the world of work.

- **What skills will I develop studying chemistry?**

Practical work will form an essential element of your course and you will further develop your ability to work safely with chemicals and accurately with equipment. Practical skills will be assessed by a range of in class activities with accompanying questions. Opportunities are built in to allow you to present your ideas to the class, work in a team and develop your own understanding of concepts. Mathematical and problem solving skills will also be important though it is not essential to study AS/A2 level Mathematics to be successful in Chemistry at AS/A2 level.

- **Course content and structure.**

The subject naturally follows on from GCSE study Additional Science or GCSE Chemistry are both suitable bases for AS/A2 level study. Commitment to study and determination to succeed are more important than the course followed.

### AS

You will consolidate and extend your knowledge of quantitative chemistry, the use of formulae and equations, further your understanding of the structure of the atom and chemical bonding, study the properties of elements across the periodic table and down selected groups. There will be an opportunity to explore the diversity of carbon chemistry with an introduction to organic nomenclature and representative reactions of specific groups of organic compounds. There will also be consolidation and extension into ideas of rate of chemical reactions, equilibrium and energy changes in reactions.

### A2

Organic chemistry is continued into A2 studies extending your knowledge of functional groups, polymers and spectroscopic methods of structure determination. The periodic trends will be revisited with a focus on chemical behaviour and the transition elements will be introduced. Finally you will be expected to bring together all the quantitative aspects of rates of reaction, equilibrium and processes and acid-base chemistry to demonstrate your understanding of how these aspects work in unity.

- **Beyond A Level Chemistry.**

Chemistry, besides being an interesting subject in its own right, opens up the possibility of a wide range of careers. The list is very large but some obvious ones might be: biochemist, chemical engineer, dentist, dietician, doctor, forensic scientist, laboratory technician, nurse, research chemist and veterinary scientist. For dentistry, medicine and veterinary science AS/A2 level study of chemistry is an essential requirement.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY: FOOD TECHNOLOGY**

**Board: Edexcel Specification number: 8FT01 (AS) 9FT01 (A2)**

**Required qualifications: You need not have any previous experience of this subject but if you have studied GCSE Food Technology you are required to have obtained a Grade B.**

The special features of this course are that it:

- offers excellent progression from GCSE Design and Technology courses
- integrates with work related activities and links to the commercial and industrial world
- provides opportunities to be creative and innovative in relation to food

The aims of the course are to offer students the opportunity to gain personal satisfaction and a positive experience from working with a variety of food materials. The practical problem solving processes in this course will encourage you towards independent learning, innovation and creativity. You will be able to apply your knowledge and understanding, in combination with your skill in using materials, tools and other equipment, to design food products of relevant materials and components to suitable specifications.

The quality of written communication will be assessed in all units.

### **Course Content**

The AS course consists of two units of assessment

Unit 1 is the Coursework Portfolio of Creative Skills

Three sections Product Investigation, Design and Development and Manufacture

Unit 2 Written Examination on the subject content which includes

Materials, components and Ingredients, Industrial Practice, Quality

The A2 Course consists of two units of assessment

Unit 3 Written Examination on the subject content which includes

Nutrition, Microbiology, Food Commodities, Product Development and Product Innovation.

Unit 4 Commercial Product Design

A complete Design and Make project which has a clear commercial purpose producing a highly marketable and innovative food product.

There is a strong coursework component in Food Technology. You will be required to design and make food products using a range of manufacturing methods and displaying a strong awareness of market influences. Collectively, the coursework units account for 60% of the A Level scheme of assessment. The work should also involve appropriate liaison with professional food technologists, designers, industry and commerce.

You will need to enjoy working independently under the guidance of your coursework tutor and become involved in the planning, management and execution of your project. An ability to set personal targets and clear goals is vitally important in this work as is good time management.

You may like to undertake a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate as a preliminary qualification in preparation for the practical food work component.

An A Level in Food Technology can lead to a multitude of careers in industry, education and the health services. Other A Level subjects which will complement a study of Food Technology are any science subject, Business Studies, Psychology, and other Design and Technology based subjects.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY – GRAPHICS WITH MATERIALS TECHNOLOGY

**Board: Edexcel Specification Number 8GR01 (AS) 9GR01 (A2)**

**Required qualifications: Grade B GCSE in Graphic Products or Resistant Materials full course or grade A in either short course**

This Graphics course offers many special features:

- it will build upon and extend the knowledge, understanding and skills established in GCSE Design and Technology courses
- it encourages the development of independent learning, creativity and innovation
- it supports the integration of work related learning and links to the industrial and commercial world

The structure of the specification allows students to develop a range of skills and outcomes at Advanced Subsidiary (AS), demonstrating their creativity, and apply these to a design and make project at Advanced level (A2). The specification seeks to develop students' knowledge and understanding of, and skills and application in, designing products. They will also develop their research, analysis, product development, project planning and evaluation skills.

### **How the course is structured**

Internal units weighted at 60 per cent (coursework portfolio)

External units (examinations at 40 per cent)

### **AS - Two units of assessment**

#### **Unit 1**

Students will produce one portfolio with **three** distinct sections which will demonstrate their creativity and flair when (1) **investigating**, (2) **designing** and (3) **making** products. Ideally different products should be chosen for the three distinct sections as students are not being asked to carry out one large design and make exercise but three smaller and more focused tasks which build up to provide a detailed portfolio of their skills. The total number of marks available for each discrete section is 30. **One** overall mark out of 90 is required. The student will produce **one** portfolio that contains evidence for all **three** distinct sections.

#### **Unit 2**

Design and Technology in Practice - 1 hour 30 minute examination set and marked by Edexcel.

### **A2 - Two units of assessment**

#### **Unit 3**

2-hour examination paper set and marked by Edexcel.

#### **Unit 4**

In this unit students are given the opportunity to apply the skills they have acquired and developed throughout this course of study, to design and make a product of their choice.

You will need to take responsibility for planning and managing your own work as there is a strong coursework component in this subject requiring independent learning and the ability to communicate with others to enhance research techniques. The skills that you will develop in planning and management are essential in Higher Education and are highly valued by employers.

An A Level in Product Design – Graphic Products can lead to many opportunities in Higher Education and careers in industry such as: Graphic Design, Computer Graphics, Art and Design and many other areas requiring creativity, CAD/CAM and communicative skills.

Other A Level subjects that will complement this course are Mathematics, the Sciences, Art and Design at A or AS Level, or it is a suitable contrast with English, History, Geography and Modern Foreign Languages.

# DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY : PRODUCT DESIGN – TEXTILES

Board: AQA Specification number: 2560

Required qualifications: Grade B GCSE in Textiles Full or Short Course

## Special Features of the Course

- Excellent progression from GCSE Design and Technology courses and in particular textiles technology.
- Specialism in a particular material area, textiles, and further study in the whole discipline of design and manufacture.
- Facility to integrate work related activity and/or links to the commercial and industrial world.
- Encourages and stimulates creativity and innovation.

The structure of the course is as follows:

### AS

Unit 1: Examination (2 hours)

Unit 2: Coursework

### A2

Unit 3: Design and Development and Manufacture of a Textile Product

Unit 4: Examination (2 hours)

## Course Content

### Unit 1 Subject Content

#### **Section A: Materials, Components and Applications**

Students will have the opportunity to work with and study a variety of textile materials so that they can understand the working characteristics, physical properties, cost and availability which influence the choice of materials in a design situation. Topics include: classification of fibres; working properties; manipulating and combining materials.

#### **Section B: Design and Market Influences**

Study in this area will introduce the broader perspectives of the design world. It will expand knowledge and understanding of the basic elements of design and how this can be effectively applied to textile products. Topics include: development of technologies and design; design in practice; communication methods; design in the human context.

#### **Section C: Processes and Manufacture**

Students will study the manufacturing systems used to make, finish and decorate materials for use as textile products. Students will be encouraged to explore practical applications of processing methods. Topics include: industrial and commercial practice; product manufacturing; systems and control.

**Unit 2 Coursework (One A3 Portfolio)** - the coursework component of the course should represent approximately 50 hours of supervised student work. Further guidance on coursework will be given at the start of the course. Coursework must be managed and organised by the student at the direction of the teacher and submitted at the time requested by the department. Failure to submit coursework of a satisfactory standard will jeopardise entry to the full AS examination.

Students of Product Design, Textiles Technology, should note that this is a practically based course with varied tasks and activities which are materials and product focused. Although the school will aim to provide most resources, students will be involved in some expense in providing fabrics and must be prepared and suitably equipped for practical work in class.

## DRAMA

**Board: Edexcel Specification number: 9113**

**Required qualifications: You need not have any previous experience of this subject but if you have studied GCSE Drama you are required to have obtained a Grade B.**

The A Level Drama and Theatre Studies course offers you the opportunity to extend and develop skills, knowledge and understanding both as a practitioner and an informed member of an audience. Throughout the course you will be encouraged to research and appreciate the social, historical and cultural influences on theatre practice.

70% of the final grade is based on devised and scripted theatre but the course is designed to help you gain an understanding of the language of Drama as well as to develop performing and analytical skills.

AS focuses on 20<sup>th</sup> Century theatre, specifically the work of Steven Berkoff and Peter Shaffer, Dario Fo and Sarah Kane, providing opportunities to approach the text as a performer, director, designer and critic.

A2 aims to extend your knowledge, skill and creativity, applying this to different theatrical forms. Set texts are drawn from pre-twentieth century theatre, such as 'Lysistrata' by Aristophanes and 'Dr Faustus' by Marlowe.

Throughout the course opportunities are provided to participate in trips both locally and in the West End. Recent performances that candidates have seen range from "The 39 Steps" to the most recent RSC production of A Midsummer Night's Dream. Specialist workshops are also provided, such as the recent 'Commedia dell'Arte' day run very successfully by a professional actor. Year 13 students also work closely with local primary schools using theatre in education to highlight road safety issues.

The skills explored throughout the course are becoming increasingly valued by both employers and universities. Excellent communication skills and the ability to work collaboratively with others are central to this course.

The study of Drama and Theatre Arts develops imagination, fosters creativity and promotes personal and social development. It is a challenging and rewarding course with a strong practical element. Past students have gone on to study a range of different courses from Drama and Education at The Central School of Speech and Drama to humanities degrees at Oxford. Most maintain a strong interest in the performing arts.

## **ECONOMICS**

**Board: AQA Specification number: 2140.**

**Required qualifications: Grade B GCSE English and Mathematics. You need not have any previous experience of this subject, but if you have studied GCSE Business Studies and GCSE Economics you are required to have obtained a Grade B.**

The difference between Economics and Business Studies is essentially one of outlook. Economics will look at any given event in the country, such as an increase in defence spending because of the Iraq crises or the implications of the 'Blue Tongue' disease and its implications for keeping a stable food market – and in a broad way in terms of the reduced spending in health care that will now be necessary. Business Studies will look at the effects of these crises in terms of businesses losing markets and suppliers. There are common areas but Economics is concerned with the panoramic view – how the different parts of the national and international economy interact. The magnitude and depth of the impact on both the firm and consumers is explored and contrasted with that on the efficiency of UK markets and the effectiveness of various Government responses.

The main requirement of the course is an interest in the modern world. We arrange a programme of visits to and from speakers from local factories and offices. In the past we have visited firms and environments in Barcelona, Amsterdam and Prague. It is very important for students to appreciate the scale of the impact of globalisation and interdependence between UK and international firms and the importance of the benefits to the UK in terms of competitiveness and efficiency that can flow from our open economy. You will need to update your notes as the economic situation changes. You will research a topic using newspaper articles, the internet and the library. The course is of a practical nature and, after acquiring a theoretical base, you will be invited to assess and compare the theory with the reality in practice. In lessons you will undertake presentations and use ICT to test hypotheses. Extensive exam practice is an integral part of student assessment. The subject appeals to students who enjoy dynamic thinking, grappling with the conflicts of economic objectives and considering how policies are formulated. It is a subject that demands an objective and disciplined approach; students need to focus on this style of thinking in order to develop a more critical approach in discussion and written work. Do you want to really understand the economic realities that present apparent contradictions of: affluence and poverty; consumerism and the need for capital investment (as much of a pressing issue for developed and developing countries) both in the UK and between countries?

Being a social science, you will find this subject goes well with other sciences such as Psychology and Politics but equally well with Science, Mathematics, ICT and English. Economics can lead to a wide range of Higher Education and employment opportunities, particularly if you are considering a career in the city (finance, business, marketing, management, on the stock exchange), as an economic advisor to businesses or governments, a systems analyst, or economics correspondent for the BBC or ITV.

### **Trips and costs**

1. A voluntary trip organised for all students in the department may occur in year 12 or 13, costing approximately £500 for an 8 or 9 day trip abroad in Europe.
2. A Voluntary student conference on exam preparation for AS or A2 costs approx £20.00 entry fee and the train fare to London.

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

**Board: AQA (Specification A)**

**Course code: 2720**

**Required qualifications: Grade B in both English and English Literature GCSE**

You should consider this course if you have enjoyed GCSE English and would like to continue studying a wide range of texts while also developing your own writing. As well as three lively modern classics, you will study the language of speech and look closely at non-fiction texts, making this a varied and interesting course to pursue and very different from the more traditional English Literature A Level.

The main difference between this course and study at GCSE is that you will learn to integrate literary and linguistic approaches when considering texts. To help you to do this, the course will begin with the study of grammar, which is not as terrifying as it sounds and serves as a foundation for precise analysis of writers' techniques. You will also find the study of speech new and refreshing as you consider the language we use in casual conversation and more formal settings – classrooms, news interviews, workplaces and so on.

During Year 12 you will develop your enjoyment and appreciation of literature beyond GCSE, focusing on drama and prose fiction and reading a total of three texts. There are two units, each assessed by an examination. In Unit 1 you will build your skills of analysis by writing an essay on one set text. Your second response allows for more creativity, as you will be asked to write, for example, a letter or diary written by a character at a certain point in the story. Spoken English is the focus of Unit 2, where you will be asked to write about unseen passages and to examine how speech is represented in your third set text.

Year 13 allows you to develop your independent study skills as you produce a comparison of the work of two poets you have chosen to read, assessed as coursework. You will also explore a wide range of non-fiction in preparation for the examination, where you will analyse short unseen texts and produce a piece of your own writing based on a short stimulus passage.

We aim to make lessons lively and enjoyable, with discussion a key part of the learning process. All students are encouraged to participate in a supportive atmosphere designed to build confidence and allow individuals to take risks and experiment with ideas. Teaching staff are happy to offer extra support to students at any time during the course.

We have been delighted to see a substantial increase in interest in this A Level at Westcliff which reflects a national trend. The areas developed – summary skills, analytical skills, the use of an appropriate style and register – are valuable for any degree course and any career where effective communication is important. The subject would complement many other A Level courses and has proved particularly useful for those who wish to train as primary-school teachers. Language itself is a growing area of interest and courses in language, communication and linguistics are increasingly popular at university.

## ENGLISH LITERATURE

**Board: AQA (Specification A)**

**Course code: 2740**

**Required qualifications: Grade B in both English and English Literature GCSE**

If you have a passion for reading, like to examine human nature and love discussing your views, ideas and opinions, this is the course for you. Studying literature allows you to broaden your experience of reading, encourages and values independent thought and develops your skills of analysis and communication.

This is a syllabus freed from the constraints of exam board set texts and selected by the English department because we believe it will offer a good foundation for university study in English (and a range of other subjects) as well as being an interesting self-contained course. The aim is to develop close reading skills through the study of set texts but also to encourage all students to read independently and widely, acquiring an overview of literary styles, techniques and themes. In both years, there are two units: one assessed by examination, the other by coursework.

We have chosen Victorian Literature as the focus for your studies in Year 12 because of our enthusiasm for the period. In lessons you will explore at least three texts from this area. A selection of Victorian poetry will be read in preparation for the examination, while a novel and two plays will be studied for coursework. The texts will be selected to satisfy a range of tastes: some will have been written in the Victorian period; others will be more recent but will have a Victorian setting, meaning that their language and attitudes will be more up-to-date and accessible. The coursework tasks will be negotiated with your teacher, allowing you to focus on areas that interest you. As well as writing essays about the texts you have studied, you can choose to submit a creative response to one text in place of an essay if you wish. In addition, you will develop your independent study skills by reading two further novels as well as considering a range of extracts from various genres in class. A further examination question will require you to examine an unseen passage in the light of this wider reading.

The Year 13 course is based on the theme of Love through the Ages and you will read a range of poetry, prose and drama connected to this theme drawn from the whole of literary history, written by men and women of all ages and reflecting a host of different attitudes to this vital part of human existence. In the examination, you will consider four unseen passages, using the skills you have acquired during the course. For coursework, you will compare the Shakespeare play studied in class (currently *Antony and Cleopatra*) with two other texts which you may be able to choose for yourself.

We aim to make lessons lively, enjoyable and interactive, with discussion, student-led sessions and group work a key part of the learning process. All students are encouraged to participate in a supportive atmosphere designed to build confidence and allow individuals to take risks and experiment with ideas. Teaching staff are happy to offer extra support to students at any time during the course and provide individual tutorials during the coursework preparation period.

Many university courses and careers will be open to you if you study this subject. If you intend to study English Literature at university, you are strongly advised to take this A Level rather than the combined course, since you will read a wider range of texts which will prepare you better for interviews and undergraduate study. Whether or not you wish to pursue the subject after the sixth form, this course will leave you with invaluable life skills: the ability to read critically, appreciatively and intelligently and the confidence to write coherently and fluently.

## **FRENCH**

**Board : Edexcel Specification Number: 8FR01 (AS) 9FR01 (A2)**

**Required qualifications : Grade A at GCSE**

The course leading to AS or A Level in French is aimed at developing the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening across a much broader range of topic areas by studying the contemporary society and history of countries where the target language is spoken. Students will need to be able to develop independence in their language learning and learn to express their own ideas and opinions convincingly in both the written and spoken language. By focusing on authentic texts and materials students will also be able to enhance their comprehension when listening or reading the foreign language in context.

In Year 12 the course will concentrate on the study of topic areas such as youth culture, lifestyle, health and fitness, travel and tourism and education and employment in the target language countries. In addition to this, students will focus on the grammar of the language in order that they may express themselves accurately in both written and spoken language. Students are assessed at the end of Year 12 by two examinations. The speaking component will be a discussion in the language prompted by a source text, with a reading, writing and listening paper forming the majority of the assessment. In Year 13, students will study a broader range of topics and undertake individual research on a topic which interests them in preparation for the Unit 3 and 4 examinations. Students will again be assessed by means of an oral discussion, with a translation and essay writing paper forming the principal part of the final year assessment.

In addition to lessons, students will also have the regular opportunity of working in small groups with the Foreign Language Assistant in order to develop greater confidence and independence in the spoken language. Opportunities for students to spend time in France can be offered, for example by undertaking a period of work experience in the country.

Studying a Modern Foreign Language at Advanced Level will enable you to develop a range of skills which will equip you well for both employment and higher education, as either a student of languages or to complement courses such as law, business and other specialist subjects. You will find the course both challenging and stimulating and the practical and academic skills acquired during the course will serve you well in the future.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

**Board: AQA AS (1031) A2 (2031)**

**Required qualifications: Grade B GCSE in Geography.**

Geography is the study of the dynamic physical environment and the ways in which human activity can modify and manage it. Geography allows us to investigate the world as it is today and understand change in the human and physical environment.

So what can you expect to study at AS, and how might it be different than your GCSE course? The AS course is equally divided between physical and human Geography. It examines familiar GCSE topics such as global population change and river landforms in greater depth as well as including new ones such as River Basin Management, the geopolitics of energy supply and sea level changes. By the end of the course you will be able to demonstrate a wide range of transferable skills, including extended writing, graphical skills, statistics and research techniques. The course will assess your understanding of physical and human geography in a 2 hour written paper and assess the fieldwork element of the course in a written 'applied geography' skills paper.

In your A2 course you will again have the opportunity to study new topics such as plate tectonics, the challenges facing ecosystems and world cities. A2 will differ from AS in that you are required to work more independently researching topics and thereby demonstrating a greater depth of understanding.

One of the highlights of any geography course is the residential field trip, where students enjoy the opportunity to learn about the environment through 'hands-on' experience. The AS field trip for 2010 is based in the Cevennes National Park, France, where experienced staff will give you expert tuition in a range of fieldwork techniques studying Rivers, Ecosystems, Town Study and Granite Landscapes. The field trip is compulsory for AS level students and costs approximately £420.00 for a week.

Geography is accepted as a standard A Level for university entrance in a wide variety of subjects. Taken with Science, Psychology or Mathematics, Geography supports a wide range of university courses such as Environmental Science or Engineering. If taken with History, English or a language you can have access to university courses in Law, or the Media.

The world is continuously changing. Make sure you have the necessary skills to understand these changes by studying Geography.

*"Geography is a subject which holds the key to our future" Michael Palin*

## GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

**Board: Edexcel Specification number: 8GP01/9GP01**

**Required qualifications: Grade B GCSE in either History, English or English Literature**

“Was fun, interesting and enjoyable. Has inspired a great interest for politics.”  
A former sixth form student

Politics focuses on *power* and *action*. Whoever, or whichever, group has power therefore controls society and inevitably us. Consequently, as students, we must aim to find out how UK politics and international politics operate. You will be expected to scrutinize processes, institutions, parties, prime ministers, nation-states, and organizations in order to gain an understanding of how the world works to day.

### AS

*People and Politics*: Introduces the main concepts of politics (the State, democracy and citizenship, dictatorship, electoral systems, parties, ideologies, and pressure groups). How democratic is the UK?

*Governing the UK*: Examines the effectiveness of government institutions (the role of Parliament, Prime Minister and Cabinet, civil service, and the Judiciary). Is Gordon Brown an elected dictator?

### A2

*International Politics*: Major developments in international relations since 1945: conflict resolution, analysis of international organizations (UNO, WTO, World Bank, EU, NATO, and OSCE), the impact upon UK politics of the changing world order, globalization, global economy, European integration and national sovereignty. What does the future hold after the war in Iraq and the terrorist attacks in London?

AS and A2 examinations are divided between short answer questions, a stimulus response questions, and essays. No coursework component applies.

You need to have a keen interest in current affairs, a willingness to defend your view against your fellows and an inquisitive character in order to distinguish between fact and politicians' rhetoric. Therefore, good research abilities are essential along with good writing skills, though these will be enhanced during the course and the use of ICT will be promoted. The course will develop your understanding and evaluation of political ideas, influences and processes, and how these are applied to current society. You will also acquire a critical analytical approach to issues and controversies: a skill that will later serve you well at university and in your subsequent career. Furthermore, you will increase your knowledge and understanding of societal structures and institutions along with analysis of international comparisons. Politics will stimulate and challenge your perceptions and evaluation skills. As part of the course you will have a chance to quiz leading local and national politicians in the UK, such as David Amess, and visit the House of Commons and House of Lords in Year 12. We are also planning an optional European trip, likely to be to Paris, in February 2011, costing approximately £200.

Politics is an ideal subject combination with any of the following A Levels: History, English, Business Studies, Economics, Geography, Psychology, Languages, Religious Studies, and Drama. It forms an excellent basis for the following degrees: Political Science, International Relations, Law, History, European Studies, Sociology, Business Studies, Philosophy, Economics, and Languages. The subject also leads to a variety of careers: journalism, the legal profession, banking, commerce, employment with multinational corporations, teaching/lecturing, the diplomatic corps, the civil service,

the military, the European Union/United Nations Organization or other international organizations, and professional politician.

## **HISTORY**

**Board: Edexcel Specification number: 9264**

**Required qualification: You must have a Grade B in GCSE History.**

Success in A Level History requires enthusiasm, intellectual ability and hard work. You are expected to think for yourself in class discussion as well as on paper. If you enjoy finding out about how the 20th Century society evolved in three very different countries, you will find this subject interesting and rewarding. History at A Level is essentially analytical. You will have to write essays which require reading about, making notes on, thinking about and making sense of historical problems. You will also learn how to read historical documents and practise interpreting them. The AS Level course consists of two units:

- A sources paper on “Votes for Women - 1860-1930” (50%).
- An essay paper on “Life in the Soviet Union 1924-1953” and “Mao’s China 1947-76” (50%).

The A2 course consists of two more units:

- A combined essay and sources paper on “The United States – 1917-54; Boom; Bust and Recovery” (60% of A2).
- A study of change over a 100 year period, which combines personal study and coursework. The topic chosen is “The Industrial Revolution, 1780-1914”

### **What will I gain from this course?**

You should emerge from A Level History with a greater understanding of human behaviour and of how our society has been shaped by the past. It is therefore a very good preparation for a wide variety of careers, from business and administration to law, journalism, and teaching. Many Westcliff students have gone on to study History at university, either on its own or in combination with another subject.

‘Historians are taught to sift evidence and to judge people. That is not a bad recipe for management generally’ (Daphne Park, former principal of Somerville College, Oxford and member of the Secret Intelligence Services).

# INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

**Board: AQA Specification number: 2521**

**Required qualification: Grade B GCSE full course Information and Communication Technology or Grade A\* GCSE short course Information and Communication Technology.**

The course is *not* one which focuses on topics such as programming and computer architecture. Two things are distinctive about it:

- It endeavours to promote an understanding of information and communication technology from a wide perspective. It includes, for example, study of the effects and limitations of information and communication technology, and aims to extend students' understanding of the new opportunities which it provides within organisations and society.
- It seeks to develop students' practical experience and skills in applying information technology effectively to challenging real world situations. You will utilise the full facilities of various packages and bring together your knowledge and skills in this problem solving.

It is a course which requires a good level of numeracy and written English, together with the capacity for systematic thought and the ability to understand and use advanced features of software packages. It will be very helpful for students to have a home PC.

The AS and A2 qualifications together consist of four units, three of which are assessed by means of written examinations.

**At AS two complementary units are concerned with applying ICT to solve problems and study of the opportunities for, and effects of, using ICT in the world today.**

**Unit 1 (Written Paper) 'Practical Problem Solving in the Digital World' will cover:**

- Practical use of ICT, identifying, designing, producing, testing, documenting and evaluating solutions.
- Data entry, storage, output of information, use of software, current health and safety legislation.

**Unit 2 (Written Paper) 'Living in the Digital World' will cover:**

- ICT systems, their components, uses, users, safety and security.
- Data and information, data transfer, backup and recovery.

**At A2, students will study the concepts associated with the use of ICT in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Practical skills of co-operative working and project management are developed in chosen areas of ICT.**

**Unit 3 (Written Paper) 'The Use of ICT in the Digital World' will cover:**

- Developments in technology, information needs of organisations, ICT systems, management of ICT.
- Developing ICT systems, introducing large ICT systems into organisations.
- Training and supporting users of ICT systems.

**Unit 4 (Coursework) 'Practical Issues Involved in the Use of ICT in the Digital World' will cover:**

- Practical issues involved in managing the use of ICT in organisations
- Investigating, analysing, defining requirements.
- Selecting and using appropriate technologies, designing solutions, methods of testing and installations, documenting and evaluating.

In recent years a selected number of students have also been able to complete an Open University ICT course in addition to their Advanced level.

ICT has the flexibility to be combined with a wide range of subjects and provides many opportunities, both for further study at degree level and for entry into a rapidly developing and well-paid industrial sector.

## **LAW at Westcliff High School for Girls**

**Board: AQA Specification number: 2160**

**Required qualification: No prior knowledge of Law is required. GCSE English Language at grade B or above.**

Law is a relatively new subject at A Level to Westcliff High School for Girls. This subject can provide a good platform for further legal study at university or just as a stimulating subject to study in the Sixth Form.

You will gain an overview of how the English legal system works and will then move on to look at specific areas of civil and criminal law.

On the AS course, you will learn about the following:

- people who work in the court system such as judges, barristers and solicitors;
- the court system and the type of cases dealt with;
- how laws are made and why law changes;
- the civil law of negligence and what you must do to successfully sue for compensation; the criminal law of assault, battery, Actual Bodily Harm (ABH) and Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH).

In Year 13, you will study criminal law in depth including topics such as murder, manslaughter, insanity, robbery and burglary.

Students will visit the 'Old Bailey' to watch real trials in progress as well as other courtrooms. The desire to get involved in debates and mock trials is essential.

There is no coursework. There are two 1½ hour exams for AS Law and two further exams in Year 13 for A2 Law.

With A2 Law you can go to university to study Law or a variety of other subjects; you can study for a Legal Executive's qualification at your local college or enter employment. Students studying Law in the past have gone on to enter the police force, join social services and work in general business.

## MATHEMATICS AND FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Board: Edexcel Specification number: 9371 (Mathematics)  
9372 (Further Mathematics)

**Required qualification:** Grade A at GCSE Mathematics and a good standard of algebra. (An algebra test will be set on Induction Day, to assess student's suitability for the course). If you wish to study Further Mathematics you must like doing Mathematics and reach Grade A at A Level by the end of Year 12 for the full A Level; for AS Further Maths an A grade at A Level is not compulsory.

**Course Content:** Mathematics at this level builds on the work of GCSE but also introduces new ideas and methods which will give you the mathematical skills and knowledge to solve problems.

The AS/A Level courses for Mathematics and Further Mathematics mainly consist of three elements - pure mathematics, statistics and mechanics. The pure mathematics part is compulsory but there is some flexibility as to the proportions of statistics and mechanics you can study. Decision mathematics may also be studied – this is a relatively modern development in mathematics where given procedures are used to solve problems.

**Pure Mathematics:** This builds on the concepts of GCSE but extends them. Algebra, trigonometry, coordinate geometry and series are topics you are familiar with and which will be developed. You will study the ideas of calculus to a high level, initially looking at gradients of graphs and areas under graphs. You will find many of the ideas in pure mathematics are interesting in their own right and they form an important foundation for the other branches of mathematics studied.

**Statistics:** This is a more formal and wide ranging development of the statistics studied at GCSE. It involves learning how to analyse and summarise numerical data in order to draw conclusions from it. The range of the probability problems of GCSE will be extended. Many of the ideas you will meet in this part of the course have applications in a wide area of other fields - from assessing what car insurance is going to cost next year, to checking that products made in a factory meet required standards.

**Mechanics:** In this area you will learn how to describe mathematically the motion of objects and how they respond to forces acting upon them, from cars in the street to satellites revolving around a planet. Much of what you will do is based on simple mathematical models; i.e. turning a complicated physical problem into a simpler one that can be analysed and solved using mathematical methods. You will study two main areas:

**Statics** which looks at the mathematics of objects which are stationary and

**Dynamics** which deals with how objects move and why they move in particular ways.

**Examinations:** Most students will study in Year 12 three AS modules: two in pure mathematics (C1 and C2) and one in statistics (S1). Those who wish to continue with this subject will take three more modules in Year 13 to complete their A Level. These A2 modules will be C3 and C4 with M1 (mechanics).

Those students in the Year 12 accelerated set will complete six modules for the A Level by the end of that year. They will then have the opportunity in Year 13 of taking three or six more modules, in order to obtain an AS or A Level in Further Mathematics.

Each module will be tested by an exam lasting 1 hour 30 minutes. During the course you will have regular testing of work covered (approx. 6 tests per module) and mock examinations before the exams.

### Links to other Subjects and Careers:

An AS in Mathematics is very valuable as a supporting subject to many courses at A Level and degree level, especially in the sciences, geography, psychology, sociology and medical courses.

A Level Mathematics is a much sought after qualification for entry to a wide variety of courses in Higher Education. There are also many areas of employment that regard an A Level in Mathematics as an important qualification.

If you are hoping to read Mathematics, a Physical Science or Engineering, A Levels in Mathematics and Further Mathematics are highly advantageous. A Level Mathematics is strongly recommended for Higher Education courses in Economics, Medicine, Architecture, Engineering, Accountancy, Teaching, Psychology and Computing.

# MUSIC

Board: AQA      Specification Number: 5271

Required entry standard: Grade B in GCSE Music or a high level of musical ability.

The AS Music Examination comprises 3 units

## Unit 1 (Influences on Music)

**Section A** (30 minutes) is a listening paper to music drawn from any period of musical history. The focus on listening skills, as opposed to the knowledge of musical history, is expected.

**Section B (Historical Study)** – *The Western Classical Tradition* focuses on 2 movements from Mozart's Symphony No. 41. Two essay questions will be asked of which only one is required to attempt. An unmarked copy of the score will be allowed in the examination.

**Section C (Historical Study)** will involve the study of *Choral Music in the Baroque Period*. For this, two essay questions will be asked, and only one is expected to be answered.

## **Unit 2 (Creating Musical Ideas)**

It is necessary to demonstrate ability to create and develop musical ideas with technical control and expressive understanding. Currently, the compositional techniques taught are harmonising a 16-bar melody in 4 parts and writing 2 part counterpoint over a given piano accompaniment of 24 bars.

## **Unit 3 (Interpreting Musical Ideas)**

This unit involves presenting two performances on an instrument or singing from a list of options. Each performance should last between 5 and 8 minutes.

This subject may be taught in conjunction with Westcliff High School for Girls.

## PHYSICS

**Board: AQA                      Specification Number: Physics A**

**Required entry standard: Grade B GCSE Core Science and Grade A in Additional Science, or an average B in Separate Sciences with B in Physics, and Grade B GCSE Mathematics.**

At AS/A2 Level Physics is very different from GCSE; the increased study time means that we can discuss topics in more detail which makes the subject much more interesting. We include a lot of modern Physics such as wave-particle duality and quantum theory. These topics never fail to fascinate students and every opportunity will be given to you to fully understand these complex topics.

The coursework for GCE Physics will consist of a short test based on experimental work carried out in your normal lessons in a similar manner to the ISAs you carried out for GCSE. In Y12 and Y13 you will use more specialised equipment so experimental work is more detailed and, hopefully, more enjoyable.

At WHSG our A Level Physics is designed in small parts that join together to complete the specification requirements of the Unit as set out by the Examination Board. There are 3 Units of study at AS level; "Particles, quantum phenomena and electricity", "Mechanics, materials and waves" and "Investigative and practical skills for AS". There are a further 3 for the A2 qualification; "Fields and further mechanics", "Nuclear and thermal physics with optional topic" and "Investigative and practical skills for A2". For each of the topics within a Unit you will receive a study guide that includes detailed notes, a reading list, examination tips and details of experimental work to be carried out. They also contain details of the homework assignments you will be expected to carry out for that topic. You will be expected to read around the subject in your self study time. A consequence of this is that more lesson time can be spent in discussion, problem solving and experimentation. This approach has allowed your predecessors to obtain high grades in an enjoyable manner.

Apart from getting a high grade, students who follow this course develop a wide range of skills which equip them for success in life. Studying Physics develops your ability to analyse and solve problems theoretically and practically in many situations. It develops your ability to comprehend and communicate ideas orally and in writing and enables you to translate information to and from prose, graphs, numerical data and diagrams. A person with these skills will be successful in any walk of life and will be very popular with potential employers and University Admission Tutors.

Past students have said how much they have enjoyed the course; humour plays an important part in lessons. They have gone on to study a wide variety of subjects in many different universities including highly competitive ones. Many choose to read Physics but other degrees popular with A Level physicists are Medicine, Veterinary Science, Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Engineering, Chemistry, Biology, Computer Science, Business and Education.

A Level Physics is a good preparation for nearly every career because it teaches you to think clearly and analytically. Many people at the top of their profession were once Physics students.

## **PSYCHOLOGY**

**Board: AQA Specification number: 6181**

**Required qualifications: Grade BB GCSE Double Science and Grade B GCSE English**

Psychology is the scientific study of human behaviour. For these reasons a sound science base at GCSE is essential. It is a rapidly expanding discipline which actively promotes original and sometimes radical philosophical and scientific ideas. If you are fascinated or puzzled by what motivates our thoughts and actions in an increasingly complex and demanding world then the study of Psychology could be a very rewarding experience for you.

The first year course (AS) involves the study of human memory and attachment behaviour in young animals and human infants. The scientific study of stress, including its causes and consequences, is also examined. In social psychology, obedience and conformity are seen as necessary for the functioning of society, but also as a tool by which tyrannical political regimes can exert their control. All these issues will be examined by a structured question format. You will need to be aware of the manner in which Psychologists collect their data and develop their views so a Research Methods section will be examined in year one. In year two you will be assessed by essay and structured question format only, and there is no coursework assignment. You will sit one module (Unit 2) in January of Year 12 and Unit 1 in May. You will need to write fluently and accurately, which is the reason we demand a GCSE B grade in English.

Many employers now appreciate the skills and qualities acquired by successful Psychology students and such students have suitable skills to follow training in various health service professions, teaching, legal work, human resources, advertising and the Civil Service. Those who wish to go all the way in the study of Psychology may choose to become a professional Psychologist working in a specialist area chosen from a wide range.

## **RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**Board: AQA Specification number: 2060**

**Required qualification: Grade B GCSE Religious Studies (Short or Full Course) and at least Grade B in GCSE English or History.**

If you enjoy debate, argument and thinking about the big issues then this is the course for you. This course takes a philosophical approach to Religious Studies, helping you to develop critical and analytical skills that can be used in any subject at University. This subject does not necessarily lead to a theology or religious studies degree, but is equally well suited to those of you thinking of Law, Sociology, Culture Studies, Philosophy, English and History, not to mention a whole range of other subjects. Many students have chosen over the years to continue with Philosophy at University and have no regrets about it.

### **AS: Religion and Ethics 1**

You will study some of the classic approaches to moral decision making, Utilitarianism as proposed by Bentham and Mill, and Situation Ethics. You will evaluate these approaches, then consider religious approaches to the nature and value of human life. All of this will be applied to the issues of abortion and euthanasia.

### **Religion, Philosophy and Science**

You examine the concept of miracle and arguments of the great British philosopher David Hume in relation to these supposed phenomena. You will explore the philosophy behind the Design Argument, critically evaluating it, trying to decide on its relative value. You will question the problems of Creation and the way in which this area is used to suggest the opposition of science and religion. You will consider the impact of quantum mechanics and look at its implications for religion.

### **A2: Philosophy of Religion**

This course explores the relationship between faith and reason through the ontological argument. It will consider verification theories and their application to the problems of language, particularly in relation to religious expressions. It will look in depth at the problems of evil and resolutions that can be offered. Then you will consider the nature of human existence, personal identity and the possibility of existence after death, and the Near Death Experience.

### **Life, Death and Beyond**

What does it mean to be human? Is death the end? You will consider religious and non-religious views on why we live and die. As well as looking at religious and non-religious views on the future of humanity.

Each session is assessed by an examination. Throughout the course you will use a range of learning styles, and you will learn how to approach writing philosophical responses. You will learn how to construct effective arguments and make full use of examples.

If you are someone who has read and enjoyed Sophie's World by Jostein Gaarder, or any of his other works then this course will appeal to you. Equally if you are interested in human beings, what we are, why we are here, and where we are going, then this course will appeal to you. There is no need for you to have a religious belief in order to succeed in this course.

## **SPANISH**

**Board : Edexcel Specification Number: 8SP01 (AS) 9SP01 (A2)**  
**Required qualifications : Grade A at GCSE**

The course leading to AS or A Level in Spanish is aimed at developing the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening across a much broader range of topic areas by studying the contemporary society and history of countries where the target language is spoken. Students will need to be able to develop independence in their language learning and learn to express their own ideas and opinions convincingly in both the written and spoken language. By focusing on authentic texts and materials students will also be able to enhance their comprehension when listening or reading the foreign language in context.

In Year 12 the course will concentrate on the study of topic areas such as youth culture, lifestyle, health and fitness, travel and tourism and education and employment in the target language countries. In addition to this, students will focus on the grammar of the language in order that they may express themselves accurately in both written and spoken language. Students are assessed at the end of Year 12 by two examinations. The speaking component will be a discussion in the language prompted by a source text, with a reading, writing and listening paper forming the majority of the assessment. In Year 13, students will study a broader range of topics and undertake individual research on a topic which interests them in preparation for the Unit 3 and 4 examinations. Students will again be assessed by means of an oral discussion, with a translation and essay writing paper forming the principal part of the final year assessment.

In addition to lessons, students will also have the regular opportunity of working in small groups with the Foreign Language Assistant in order to develop greater confidence and independence in the spoken language. Opportunities for students to spend time in Spain can be offered, for example by undertaking a period of work experience in the country.

Studying a Modern Foreign Language at Advanced Level will enable you to develop a range of skills which will equip you well for both employment and higher education, as either a student of languages or to complement courses such as law, business and other specialist subjects. You will find the course both challenging and stimulating and the practical and academic skills acquired during the course will serve you well in the future.

## **SPORT AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

**Board: AQA Specification number: 6571**

**Required qualification: You do NOT need to have studied Physical Education at GCSE level. What matters most is your interest, an enquiring mind and a willingness to apply yourself to theoretical and practical study as a reflective performer.**

### **Why study Physical Education?**

Physical Education is one of the fastest growing areas of study today and links very closely to the growth of Sports Science and Leisure Industry. Physical Education at A Level is a progression from GCSE PE and underpins undergraduate study aiming to help students gain a wider more practical and more personal understanding of sport and its various functions. Looking at the performer in action; the performer as a person and the performer in their social setting.

### **What's in the course?**

During the AS course, modules will be delivered in two sections:

Unit 1 Opportunities for and the effects of leading a healthy and active lifestyle.

Unit 2 Analysis and evaluation of physical activity as a performer and/or in an adopted role(s).

During the A2 course modules will be delivered in 2 sections:

Unit 3 Optimising performance and evaluating contemporary issues within sport.

Unit 4 Optimising practical performance in a competitive situation.

Units 1 and 3 are theory based and are examined by an external examination. Unit 2 has a practical and theoretical element to it and you are assessed as a performer as well as being assessed on your theoretical understanding. Unit 4 is a practical assessment. All units develop the student's ability to apply theory to the practical situation.

### **Where can I get more information?**

The examination board web page can be found at [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk) containing detailed syllabus content and resources. PE staff will always make themselves available for consultation.

**Westcliff High School for Girls  
Public Examination Results Summer 2009**



**Year 13 A Level (127 Students)**

<b>Advanced Extension Award</b>	<b>Distinction</b>	<b>Merit</b>	<b>Entries</b>
English	1		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>

<b>GCE A Level</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>Entries</b>
Biology	20	12	6	1	1		40
Business Studies	10	8	2				20
Chemistry	25	12	3	3			43
Critical Thinking		1	1				2
Design Technology: Food Technology	2	2					4
Design Technology: Product Design Graphics with Materials		3					3
Design Technology: Product Design Textiles	4						4
Drama	2	3	1				6
Economics	4	1	1				6
English Language and Literature	11	7	3				21
English Literature	9	7	2				18
Fine Art	11	2	2	1			16
French	2	1	1	1			5
Further Mathematics	5						5
Geography	17	6					23
Geology		1					1
German	1						1
Government and Politics	13	7	1	1			22
History	18	14	3				35
Information Communication Technology	6	5	3	2			16
Law	2		3	2			7
Mathematics	27	12	6	2			47
Media Studies		1					1
Music	1	1		1			3
Physical Education	2	2	1				5
Physics	6	5	3				14
Psychology	16	10	3	2	2		33
Religious Studies	3	2		3			8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>409</b>
<b>Actual Percentage</b>	<b>53.06</b>	<b>30.56</b>	<b>11.00</b>	<b>4.65</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Cumulative Percentage</b>	<b>53.06</b>	<b>83.62</b>	<b>94.62</b>	<b>99.27</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>GCE AS Level</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>Entries</b>
Biology	2	5		2	2		11
Chemistry		3	2	1	1		7
Critical Thinking	31	29	22	12			94
Design Technology: Graphics				1	1		2
Dance	2						2
Drama		2	1				3
Economics			2	1			3
English Language and Literature	2	1	1				4
English Literature	1	1					2
Fine Art	1	1					2
French	1	1	2	1			5
Further Mathematics	1	1					2
Geography		2	1				3
German					1		1
Government and Politics				1	1		2
History	2	2	4				8
Information Communication Technology	2	3	2	1			8
Mathematics	1	2	2	2	1		8
Music		1					1
Physical Education		3	1	1			5
Physics			3	2	2		7
Psychology	1	1	5	1	1		9
Religious Studies	3		2				5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>194</b>

	<b>Average QCA Points Score per A Level Entry</b>	<b>Average Total Points Score per Candidate</b>
<b>Excluding General Studies</b>	<b>244.21</b>	<b>979.13</b>
<b>Including General Studies</b>	<b>244.21</b>	<b>979.13</b>

**Westcliff High School for Girls  
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**Year 12 AS Level (166 Students)**

<b>Advanced Extension Award</b>	<b>Distinction</b>	<b>Merit</b>	<b>Entries</b>
English	1		1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>

<b>GCE AS Level</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>Entries</b>
Biology	28	13	7	21	7		76
Business Studies		2	1		1		4
Chemistry	20	11	11	3	7		52
Design Technology: Food Technology	4	1		1	1		7
Design Technology: Product Design Graphics	1	1	1		1		4
Design Technology: Textiles	2	8	6	2			18
Drama	6	5	1				12
Economics		6	8	6	3		23
English Language and Literature	5	13	12	4			34
English Literature	15	6	12	4	3		40
Fine Art	8	10	2				20
French	5	6	7	1	3		22
Further Mathematics	10	1	3		1		15
General Studies	47	28	23	17	12		127
Geography	13	3	3	2	1		22
German	2	3	4				9
Government and Politics	17	12	3	7	1		40
History	27	21	13	9	2		72
Information Communication Technology	6						6
Law	5	2	4		1		12
Mathematics	13	10	13	12	4		52
Music		2					2
Physical Education		1	3	2			6
Physics	8	5	5	5	4		27
Psychology	10	16	13	11	1		51
Religious Studies	5	4	6	3	1		19
<b>Totals</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>54</b>		<b>772</b>
<b>Actual Percentage</b>	<b>33.29</b>	<b>24.61</b>	<b>20.85</b>	<b>14.25</b>	<b>6.99</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Cumulative Percentage</b>	<b>33.29</b>	<b>57.90</b>	<b>78.76</b>	<b>93.01</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

	<b>Average QCA Points Score per AS Entry</b>	<b>Average Total Points Score per Candidate</b>	<b>Entries Graded A or B</b>
<b>Excluding General Studies</b>	<b>114.42</b>	<b>444.58</b>	<b>57.67%</b>
<b>Including General Studies</b>	<b>114.44</b>	<b>532.23</b>	<b>57.90%</b>

The information in this prospectus for Westcliff High School for Girls was correct as at 18 September 2009.  
At that time, the outcome of some enquiries into examination results was still awaited.

**The content of this Prospectus Supplement was correct at the time of going to press, but like any school we do make changes which may affect the education we offer.**

# **WESTCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

**FOUNDATION GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
SCIENCE & ENGINEERING COLLEGE**



**Telephone:  
01702 476026**

**You can also view this prospectus at**

**[www.whsg.info](http://www.whsg.info)**