

# GCSEs Classes 9 & 10



**Michael Hall**  
a Steiner Waldorf School



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# GCSE Course Information

## Core Subjects

### English GCSE

At Michael Hall, we follow the AQA specification for English Language (8700). For this course there are no set texts, with students responding to questions relating to unseen extracts across two papers. In preparation, over the two year course, the texts we study are the vehicles to allow students to practise the independent comprehension, analytical and creative writing skills they will need in the exams. We choose a rich and diverse range of literature- poetry, prose and drama- to ensure students read a wide array of challenging and engaging texts which are deep and meaningful, with contemporary relevance. Recently we have studied 'I am Malala', 'Macbeth', '1984' and 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time', to name but a few.

Students are assessed upon their analytical and evaluative skills alongside the ability to write creatively (Paper One) and craft convincing discursive pieces (Paper Two). A Speaking and Listening assessment is completed (and recorded) during Class 10 to assess oral communication skills. Since June 2017, the examination has been graded 1-9 (with 9 demonstrating excellence) and the Speaking and Listening endorsement Pass, Merit or Distinction. There is one tier of paper for all abilities. Students' progress is tracked fortnightly and each half-term a tracking report is sent home.

#### EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA Specification 8700

#### EXAM PAPER

Paper 1: Counts for 50% of the overall qualification

Explorations in Creative Reading & Writing - 1h 45 minutes written paper

- Section A: Reading - One literature fiction text
- Section B: Writing - Descriptive or narrative writing

Paper 2: Counts for 50% of the overall qualification

Writer's Viewpoints and Perspectives - 1h 45 minutes written paper

- Section A: Reading - One non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text
- Section B: Writing - writing to present a viewpoint

Non-examination Assessment: Spoken Language

- Presenting
- Responding to questions and feedback
- Use of Standard English

#### ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/examspecs/zcbchv4>

Past papers <https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/guides/z8bkwx/revision/1>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/mrbruff/videos>

<https://uk.ixl.com>

#### EXTRA EQUIPMENT

All students will need a highlighter.



# GCSE Course Information

## Core Subjects

### Maths GCSE

Mathematics combines problem solving with multiple concepts and skills being used together with a strong element of practical application. The subject content is taught through six categories: Number, Algebra, Ratio, proportion and rates of change, Geometry and measures, Probability, Statistics.

The Mathematics course guides pupils from knowledge to insight and enables students to take the GCSE examinations in mathematics gaining an internationally recognised qualification. Three exams are taken in the Summer Term of Class 10: one non-calculator paper and two calculator papers. Students will be entered for either the Higher (9-4) or Foundation (5-1) tier. As well as our standard tracking, the Maths Department hold regular end of topic tests and end of year assessments.

#### EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA GCSE Mathematics (8300)

#### EXAM PAPER

Paper 1: Non-Calculator Paper- 1h 30 minutes written paper

- A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper. Counts for 33% of the overall qualification

Paper 2: Calculator Paper- 1h 30 minutes written paper

- A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper. Counts for 33% of the overall qualification

Paper 3: Calculator Paper- 1h 30 minutes written paper

- A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper. Counts for 33% of the overall qualification

#### ONLINE RESOURCES

GCSE Bitesize Maths  
Khan Academy  
My GCSE Maths

#### EXTRA EQUIPMENT

Students will need a Scientific Calculator, Ruler, Compass and Protractor.

#### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

None

# GCSE Combined Science - Trilogy

## SCIENCE COURSE CONTENT

We follow the AQA 9-1 GCSE specification for Science GCSE; this is Combined Science: Trilogy. This double award is equivalent to two GCSEs and covers the three sciences in a traditional fashion, taking a logical and coherent journey through the content. Students are no longer required to sit practical skills exams, as this is now assessed during the course through 16 required practicals.

Science subjects offer the opportunity to acquire transferrable skills such as:

- Using knowledge and understanding to pose questions and define problems
- Planning and carrying out investigative activities, including appropriate risks management in a range of contexts
- Collecting, selecting, processing, analysing and interpreting primary and secondary data to provide evidence
- Understanding the relationship between Science and society
- Developing communication skills in scientific contexts

The teaching of Science in the Lower School at Michael Hall gives an excellent preparation for the GCSE course and the Science teachers work closely as a team to guide students through this fascinating course.

## GCSE - Combined Science (Biology)

### THE BIOLOGY COMPONENT OF GCSE

The scheme for Biology includes Cell Biology; Organisation; Disease, infection and response; Bioenergetics; Nerves, Hormones and Homoeostasis; Reproduction, inheritance, variation and evolution; Ecology.

Of course, in many ways, the GCSE just serves to whet the appetite and awaken the students to the possibilities of Science. This is where the Main Lessons come in.

Naturally there is some overlap between the subjects covered, but the way this is done is very different. This is often where we can really enthuse the students.

## GCSE - Combined Science (Chemistry)

### THE CHEMISTRY COMPONENT OF GCSE

The content for the Chemistry component covers Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table; Bonding, Structure and Properties of matter; Quantitative Chemistry; Chemical changes; Energy Changes; Rates of Reactions; Organic Chemistry; Analysis. The Atmosphere, and using resources.

From this there is a natural progression into the more tangible properties of matter, with the general theme of Earth Materials- carbonate rock and its uses; metals, their extraction and the environmental issues around mining; the formation of oil, environmental considerations of using it as fuel, the various products we make from it and the environmental impact of their disposal.

# GCSE Combined Science - Trilogy

## GCSE - Combined Science (Physics)

### THE PHYSICS COMPONENT OF GCSE

The course encourages learners to develop confidence and a positive attitude towards Physics and to recognise its importance in their own lives and the world they live in. The topics explored in Class 9 and 10 are: Energy, Electricity, Particle model of matter, Atomic structure, Forces, Waves, Magnetism and electromagnetism.

Practical work is important in helping to apply scientific knowledge and develop investigative and practical skills. There are required practicals which will be carried out and exam questions can draw in the knowledge and skills developed from these practicals. Topic tests will be held every 2-3 weeks at the end of subject blocks along with end of year assessments, giving students an opportunity to develop their exam practice skills and better prepare them for the GCSE exams in the Summer Term of Class 10.

#### EXAMINATION BOARD

Combined Science: Trilogy AQA Specification 8464 Foundation/ Higher Tier

#### EXAM PAPER

##### **Biology Paper 1** 1h 15 minutes written paper

- Topics assessed: Biology topics 1–4: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and response; and Bioenergetics.

Counts for 16.7% of the overall qualification

##### **Biology Paper 2** 1h 15 minutes written paper

- Topics assessed: Biology topics 5–7: Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, variation and evolution; and Ecology.

Counts for 16.7% of the overall qualification

##### **Chemistry Paper 1** 1h 15 minutes written paper

- Topics assessed: Chemistry topics 8–12: Atomic structure and the periodic table; Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry; Chemical changes; and Energy changes.

Counts for 16.7% of the overall qualification

##### **Chemistry Paper 2** 1h 15 minutes written paper

- Topics assessed: Chemistry topics 13–17: The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis; Chemistry of the atmosphere; and Using resources.

Counts for 16.7% of the overall qualification

##### **Physics Paper 1** 1h 15 minutes written paper

- Topics assessed: Physics topics 18–21: Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; and Atomic structure.

Counts for 16.7% of the overall qualification

##### **Physics Paper 2** 1h 15 minutes written paper

- Topics assessed: Physics topics 22–24: Forces; Waves; and Magnetism and electro magnetism

Counts for 16.7% of the overall qualification

#### ONLINE RESOURCES

GCSE Bitesize, Khan Academy, My GCSE, s-cool, Physics and Maths Tutor  
YouTube – Primrose Kitten and freescience

# Optional Subjects

As well as the four compulsory GCSE subjects, pupils can select up to three further GCSEs from the following list.

## Geography GCSE

### COURSE CONTENT

At Michael Hall we follow the Edexcel B Geography syllabus. A new specification was introduced in 2016 and first examined in 2018. The course aims to lead students to think widely and deeply about the world. Geographical thinking is about asking questions and being independent enquirers, something which is fundamental to Steiner Waldorf education.

Geographers need to build up good knowledge and understanding of places and also understand how and why our world changes. All of these aspects will be developed during the course. To support this we will work to develop their specialist geographical language and they will need to employ skills of literacy to express themselves on paper. We also work on numeracy and statistics so that we can put figures on some phenomena and develop the ability to interpret data.

#### EXAMINATION BOARD

Edexcel Specification 1GB0

#### EXAM PAPER (THREE PAPERS)

Paper 1: Global Geographical Issues - 1hr 30mins 37.5% of the total

- 3 topics: Hazardous Earth, Development Dynamics and Challenges of an urbanising world
- The exam includes multiple-choice, short answer and extended writing questions.

Paper 2: UK Geographical Issues - 1hr 30mins 37.5% of the total

- 3 topics: The UK's evolving physical landscape, the UK's evolving human landscape and geographical investigations (including one physical and one human fieldwork investigation)
- The exam includes multiple-choice, short answer and extended writing questions.

Paper 3: People and Environmental Issues - 1hr 30mins 25% of the total

- 4 sections: people and the biosphere, forests under threat, consuming energy resources, making a geographical decision.

The exam includes multiple-choice, short answer and extended writing questions.

#### ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/subjects/zkw76sg>

<https://studywise.co.uk/gcse-revision/geography/>

#### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

There will be two days of compulsory fieldwork during the course costing approximately £60



# Optional Subjects

## History GCSE

### COURSE CONTENT

#### Why should one study History?

The formal learning of History provides you with essential approach/skills applicable to everyday life, that everyone should have, such as: answer questions specifically, using evidence to back up your arguments and judgements; research independently; comprehend that very different narratives (viewpoints) could be generated from the very same facts; empathise with other people, your human ancestors.

There are many professions that the study of History would support; but most importantly, it will make you aware of human affairs, close and far, in space and time. Finally, History helps student to make sense of the world they live in.

#### EXAMINATION BOARD

Edexcel History specification

#### EXAM PAPER (TWO PAPERS)

Paper 1: Medicine Through Time, c1250-present AND

The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-18: injuries, treatments, and the trenches

- Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
- Section A: historic environment The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-18: injuries, treatments, and the trenches: Students answer a question that assesses knowledge plus a two-part question based on two provided sources.  
Section B: thematic study Medicine Through Time, c1250-present: Students answer three questions that assess their knowledge and understanding. The first two questions are compulsory. For the third question, students answer one from a choice of two.

Paper 2: Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060–88 AND Superpowers relations and the Cold War, 1941-91

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- Section A: Period study Superpowers relations and the Cold War, 1941-91: Students answer three questions that assess their knowledge and understanding. The first two questions are compulsory. For the third question, students select two out of three parts.  
Section B: British depth study Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060–88: Students answer a single three-part question that assesses their knowledge and understanding. The first two parts are compulsory. For the third part, students select one from a choice of two.

Paper 3: Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39

- Written exam: 1 hour 20 minutes
- Section A: Students answer a question based on a provided source and a question that assesses their knowledge and understanding.
- Section B: Students answer a single four-part question, based on two provided sources and two provided interpretations.

# Optional Subjects

## German GCSE

### COURSE CONTENT

This new 2 year course concentrates on the development and practice of conversation, listening and reading comprehension and writing skills based on the kind of language young people would need in everyday life. The topics covered are: Family and relationships, School Life, Holidays, House and Local Area, Work Experience, Leisure Pursuits, Healthy Living and Environmental Issues.

We use the EDEXCEL course book "Stimmt" with audio material, a grammar book and some other authentic materials. Our exam board is Edexcel.

All 4 parts of the exam (listening, reading speaking and writing) will be assessed at the end of Class 10.

In order to deepen the students' understanding for the culture that surrounds the language, we continue working with German literature and poetry.

The teaching groups are medium sized with a friendly working atmosphere.

NB: As well as the online tracking held on our Parent Portal, all language teachers keep a 'mark book'. This book holds all results of any tests. Feedback will be given in the exercise books on the students' work, homework or tests.

### EXAMINATION BOARD

Edexcel Specification 1GN0 Foundation/ Higher Tier

### EXAM PAPER

Paper 1: Listening and Understanding (25% of the total GCSE marks)

- 45 minutes (plus 5 minutes of reading time) el 2

Paper 2: Speaking (25% of the total GCSE marks)

- 10 - 12 minutes (plus 12 minutes of preparation time)
- Task 1: Role play
- Task 2: Questions based on a picture stimulus
- Task 3: General Conversation based on two themes

Paper 3: Reading and Understanding (25% of the total GCSE marks)

- 60 minutes
- Includes short translation from German into English

Paper 4: Writing (25% of the total GCSE marks)

- 80 minutes
- Question 1 - 80/90 words (from choice of two questions)
- Question 2 - 130/150 words (from choice of two questions)
- Question 3 - translation from English into German

### ONLINE RESOURCES

Duolingo; linguascope (students will be given a log-in from their teacher).

### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

None

# Optional Subjects

## Spanish GCSE

### COURSE CONTENT

- There are 400 million native speakers of Spanish worldwide, (plus 100 million non-native speakers) and it is the language of 21 countries, including most South American countries
- Spanish is a sought-after language which is important both commercially and culturally.
- Spanish is an ideal complement to both Arts and Science subjects.
- Knowledge of Spanish will provide you with an invaluable life skill.

This new 2 year course concentrates on the development and practice of conversation, listening and reading comprehension and writing skills based on the kind of language young people would need in everyday life. The topics covered are: Family and relationships, School Life, Holidays, House and Local Area, Work Experience, Leisure Pursuits, Healthy Living and Environmental Issues.

We use the EDEXCEL course book "¡Viva!" with audio material, a grammar book and some other authentic materials. Our exam board is Edexcel.

All 4 parts of the exam (listening, reading speaking and writing) will be assessed at the end of Class 10.

In order to deepen the students' understanding for the culture that surrounds the language, we continue working with Spanish literature and poetry.

The teaching groups are medium sized with a friendly working atmosphere.

NB: As well as the online tracking held on our Parent Portal, all language teachers keep a 'mark book'. This book holds all results of any tests. Feedback will be given in the exercise books on the students' work, homework or tests.

### EXAMINATION BOARD

Edexcel

### EXAM PAPER

Paper 1: Listening and Understanding (25% of the total GCSE marks)

- 45 minutes (plus 5 minutes of reading time) el 2

Paper 2: Speaking (25% of the total GCSE marks)

- 10 - 12 minutes (plus 12 minutes of preparation time)
- Task 1: Role play
- Task 2: Questions based on a picture stimulus
- Task 3: General Conversation based on two themes

Paper 3: Reading and Understanding (25% of the total GCSE marks)

- 60 minutes
- Includes short translation from Spanish into English

Paper 4: Writing (25% of the total GCSE marks)

- 80 minutes
- Question 1 - 80/90 words (from choice of two questions)
- Question 2 - 130/150 words (from choice of two questions)
- Question 3 - translation from English into Spanish

### ONLINE RESOURCES

Duolingo, Word Reference

# Optional Subjects

## Art GCSE

### COURSE CONTENT

Students develop the skills learnt in the Lower School and Middle School in Drawing, Painting and Artist Research. Besides this, they will also be engaged in exploring further artistic media such as Printmaking and Sculpture. The Art curriculum for GCSE Art Class 9 and 10 addresses the Students' desire to widen and master their skills and knowledge on how to use materials, techniques, and artistic forms and elements to produce exciting outcomes. To accomplish this, classes are structured to extend observational skills (learning how to encounter the world through drawing and painting and enjoying a sense of discovery) research and refine mark making skills (exploration of materials, techniques and medium) and enhance judgement (developing capacity to make artistic judgements to produce personal, skilled, unique outcomes).

Contextualization with the art world, specific artists and genres, art works and processes become very relevant on this journey of bringing a higher understanding of the Arts and their mission. It is expected that on the journey, students can increase knowledge, confidence and enjoyment as creative beings.

The coursework element of the course is structured on modules tackling different themes, which enables students to achieve a wide range of learning artistic outcomes and develop their own creative process. Their exciting path of exploration is developed, refined and recorded on visually engaging sketchbooks and supporting pieces that present us the amazing journey of discovery, trial, error and success to achieve personal, skilled, in-depth and unique outcomes. Each theme is developed based on Steiner's ideas on developmental stages.

### EXAMINATION BOARD

Art & Design: Fine Art Specification AQA

### EXAM PAPER

Component 1: Personal Portfolio - 60%: 2/3 Thematic projects, internally set and assessed and externally moderated.

This component allows students opportunities to:

- develop and explore ideas
- research primary and contextual sources
- experiment with media, materials, techniques and processes
- present personal response(s) to theme(s) set by the school.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment - 40%: Externally set exam project title.

Internally assessed and externally moderated.

Students must present personal response(s) to an externally set broad-based thematic starting point, set by AQA in the ESA paper.

This component allows students opportunities to:

- develop and explore ideas
- research primary and contextual sources
- experiment with media, materials, techniques and processes
- present personal response(s) to the externally-set theme.

The Externally Set Assignment (ESA) represents the culmination of the GCSE course as it draws together all the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in Component 1.

### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

All students are encouraged to buy an art starter pack, costing around £30. This includes basic art materials so they can have the materials needed for homework outside lessons. At the moment no trips planned, but normally they would have 1 trip to a Gallery.

# Optional Subjects

## BTEC Technical Award in Art and Design Practice

### COURSE CONTENT

The BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Art and Design Practice is a complementary Technical Award and the vocational equivalent of a GCSE qualification. It is aimed at students who are interested in any aspect of art, design and craft, including researching ideas and working with different tools, materials and processes. The Level 2 is graded pass, merit, distinction and distinction\* and is equivalent to GCSE grades 4 to 8.5. The qualification focuses on an applied study of the arts and crafts sector; learners will gain a broad understanding and knowledge of working in the sector. The qualification has been designed to sit alongside the requirements of core GCSE subjects and are appropriate for learners who are motivated and challenged by learning through hands-on experiences and through content, which is concrete and related directly to those experiences.

#### **EXAMINATION BOARD**

Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Art and Design Practice.

#### **EXAM PAPER**

This qualification consists of two units over the two years: Component 1 – Creative Practice in Art and Design. Component 2 – Responding to a Client Brief.

Component 1 is assessed internally, promoting deep learning by ensuring the connection between knowledge and practice. Component 1 focuses on:

- the development of core knowledge and understanding of a range of art and design work and practice, and the key features that contribute to them, such as practitioners' processes, skills and techniques
- the development and application of skills, such as practical skills, communication and project management
- reflective practice through the development of skills and techniques that allow learners to respond to evaluation, testing and feedback and identify areas for improvement.

Component 2, the one external assessment, provides the main synoptic assessment for the qualification and builds directly on Component 1 enabling learning to be brought together and related to a real-life situation. Through this assignment learners are required to select and integrate learning from across the qualification including generating ideas and developing art and design skills and techniques.

#### **ONLINE RESOURCES**

These will be introduced throughout the course.

#### **TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT**

We may join the Art trips, visit the Design Museum and get guest speakers in.  
No extra equipment.



# How to make the best choices for you

All students taking GCSEs will also be benefitting from the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum that runs alongside these subjects, please see the separate booklet.

All students take English, Maths and Double Award Science, giving four core GCSEs. It's an option for students to choose up to three more GCSE subjects. When making a choice, we suggest that students and their parents think carefully about their needs to keep up with homework and assignments and perhaps consider whether they wish to include some study periods as an alternative to taking a subject. These study periods are made up of one double and one single lesson supervised in the Library, designed for students to work on their other GCSE subjects, with access to a computer and printer.

- What subjects do you really enjoy?
- What are your strongest skills? (discuss this with your Class Teacher and Parents)
- Have a look at the subjects available and see if there is a match between those you enjoy and the skills you have.
- Find out how subjects are assessed. The balance between Non-Examination Assessments and exams is different for every subject.
- Think about the balance of your subjects.
- Do not to make choices based on a particular teacher or on what your friends are doing. Teachers change and best friends can be placed in different groups!
- Make the most of any Subject Evenings, presentations within class, conversations with teachers and older students.
- Put plenty of time aside to think and talk about your choices – DO NOT leave it to the last minute.

| Option 1  | Option 2     | Option 3 |
|-----------|--------------|----------|
| Geography | Art          | German   |
| History   | Art & Design | Spanish  |

Choose 1 subject out of each option



