



# OASIS ACADEMY SHIRLEY PARK

## GCSE OPTIONS CHOOSING THE RIGHT SUBJECTS





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At Oasis Shirley Park, we believe that an exceptional curriculum offer should lie at the heart of what we do. This belief is one of the many reasons that we have decided to extend our KS3 to 3 years, and ask students to begin their GCSE courses in Y10.

Our academically rigorous and coherent KS3 allows students to excel and provides an important framework for their GCSEs. By placing knowledge at the heart of our KS3, we know that our students are well placed to begin their GCSE journeys as they transition into Y10.

What we now ask is for students to think hard about each of the choices they make for their GCSEs. Please use this booklet to help you, but also think about the subjects you love, find interesting, and are inspired by.

**Mr S Chaudhri**  
Headteacher





### GCSE choices and higher education

At Shirley Park we are determined to ensure the brightest future for all of our students. That means that we are ambitious with the type of post-school life that we prepare them for. The Russell Group is an organisation of 24 of the top universities in the UK (see full list here - <https://russellgroup.ac.uk/>). The guidance from the Russell Groups says that there is no benefit to studying more GCSEs at the expense of getting high grades, and that almost all universities require at least a pass in English and Maths.

### Making your choices

We aim for students to take between 8 to 10 GCSE subjects because we believe this will help our students make it onto the next stage of their academic lives.

All pupils will study English Language, English Literature, and Mathematics. All students will also be taking science, with some students being asked to take three science GCSEs. As well as this, students will need to select a further four subjects from the list below:

ONE SUBJECT FROM		ONE SUBJECT FROM	
Geography History		French Spanish	
TWO SUBJECTS FROM			
Art and Design Dance Drama	French Geography History Triple Science	Music Physical Education Spanish Religious Studies	

### Making your choices

Making the right decision for you is at the heart of the GCSE options process. In Spring 2 we will be holding an options evening where parents can speak to OASP staff. **We will then be sending out a link to all families at the end of the Spring term, which students will use to select their options.**



## Advice from students

When asked what they would and would not recommend to current year 9 students choosing their GCSE options, the year 10s had this to say.

### ***Do:***

- Pick subjects you are good at
- Pick subjects you enjoy
- Pick subjects that link with your future aspirations (e.g. doctors will need triple science!)
- Talk to teachers to get an idea of what the subject is like at GCSE
- Think carefully. Speak to your parents/family about your choices
- Make sure you are 100% certain. You don't want to be changing your options

### ***Don't:***

- Chose an option subject because your friends are
- Pick a subject because you like the teacher
- Feel pressured by family to pick certain subjects
- Be afraid to ask questions

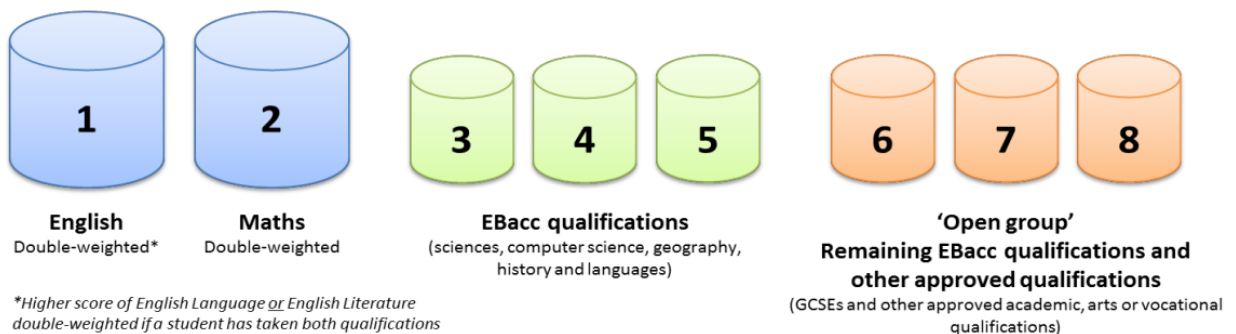
The most important part of this process is you taking time to find the right options for you. That is why you will also be given a series of options assemblies by heads of department each week. Because we want you to have as much information as possible, we have also put this booklet together, where you can read about each course and make sure that you are making the most informed decision possible.



## Advice for parents

Previously, schools and students were measured by the achievement of 5 GCSEs at A\* to C including English and Mathematics. From 2016 there will be four separate measures: Progress 8, Attainment 8, English and Mathematics and EBacc.

Progress 8 is the average progress that your child will make from year 7 to 11 in eight subjects, above or below the national achievement of similar students. The Progress 8 measure is designed to encourage all students to study a broad and balanced curriculum. For each student the 8 subjects must be a combination from the diagram below.



The Progress 8 score will always be determined by dividing the points total by 10 (the eight best suitable qualifications with English/English Literature and Mathematics counting double), regardless of how many qualifications your child sits or in which subjects.

- Attainment 8 – shows the students' total achievement in the same group of subjects as the Progress 8 measure. The attainment and score is calculated by simply adding the value of each subject grade together.
- English and Mathematics – If your child achieved a 5 or better in both English (either Language or Literature) and Mathematics.
- The EBacc – If your child achieved good grades 9 to 5 across a range of specific subjects.
- English Baccalaureate – consists of English, Mathematics, 2 x Science, History or Geography and a Language



**EXAMINATION BOARD**

AQA

**ASSESSMENT****Paper 1 (50%)**

Section A: Literature fiction

Section B: Narrative writing

**Paper 2 (50%)**

Section A: Literature non-fiction

Section B: Viewpoint writing

**HEAD OF DEPARTMENT**

Ms K Simpson

Kate.Simpson@oasisshirleypark.org

This specification should encourage students to: read fluently and write effectively. They should be able to demonstrate a **confident control of Standard English** and they should be able to write grammatically correct sentences, deploy **figurative language** and analyse texts.

Students will be encouraged to:

- Read a wide range of texts, fluently and with good understanding.
- **Read critically**, and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing.
- Write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately.
- Use grammar correctly, **punctuate and spell accurately**.
- Acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.

In addition, they must enable students to:

- Listen to and understand spoken language, and use spoken Standard English effectively. The Spoken Language endorsement will be reported on as part of the qualification, but it will not form part of the final mark and grade.



## EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA

## ASSESSMENT

### Paper 1 (40%)

Section A: Shakespeare's *Macbeth*

Section B: Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*

### Paper 2 (60%)

Section A: Priestley's *An Inspector Calls*

Section B: Power and Conflict poetry

Section C: Unseen poetry

## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Ms K Simpson

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This course encourages students to develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking. Through literature, students have a chance to **develop culturally** and acquire knowledge of the best that has been thought and written. Studying GCSE English Literature should encourage students to **read widely for pleasure**, and as a preparation for studying literature at a higher level.

Students will be encouraged to:

- Read a wide range of classic literature fluently and with good understanding, and make connections across their reading.
- Read in depth, critically and evaluatively, so that they are able to **discuss and explain their understanding and ideas**.
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often.
- Appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage.
- Write accurately, effectively and analytically about their reading, using Standard English.
- Acquire and use a **wide vocabulary**, including the grammatical terminology and other literary and linguistic terms they need to criticise and analyse what they read.



### EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA

### ASSESSMENT

Non calculator (33.3%)

Calculator (33.3%)

Calculator (33.3%)

### HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Ms N Haynes

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GCSE Maths aims to give students a clear understanding of **concepts in maths** and use the skills that they have learnt in a variety of real world applications. Problem solving and reasoning are vital to success in the course and will help set students up for their future careers.

Maths requires a range of skills that fall into three categories:

- **Computational skills:** remembering facts, formulas and calculating sums.
- **Reasoning: explaining why an answer is, or is not, correct.**
- **Problem solving:** applying what you know to real world situations.

The course is split into 5 topic areas (although more challenging questions can involve more than one topic area at a time):

- Number
- Ratio and Proportion
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Probability and Statistics

The exam takes the form of one non-calculator exam: written exam (1 hour 30 minutes; 33.3% of overall grade) and two calculator exams: written exams (1 hour 30 minutes; each are worth 33.3% of overall grade). The exams have no other requirements – any topic could come up in each of the exams!





### EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA

### ASSESSMENT

Students will sit 6 exams as part of their combined science GCSE

### HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr R. Owen

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GCSE science gives students access to knowledge and concepts that explain how living things work, what the world around us is made of and how we can change it. Students who complete work outside of class to support their studies will have their eyes opened to the beautiful complexity that science has revealed about the invisible particles and processes that shape the universe.

**Biology:** The course is based on the big idea that all living things are made of cells. Ideas of organ systems, reproduction, health and disease are developed in depth through the study of plant and human biology with topics including: Cell division and reproduction, health and fighting disease, circulation and respiration, transport in plants, material cycles.

**Chemistry:** The chemistry course focuses on the big idea of what the materials all around us are made of and how that affects their properties. Students will also learn about the chemical reactions that drive changes all around us. These are developed further by the exploration of topics like: Acids and bases – a deep look into this important area of chemistry, chemical reactivity – how we can produce new substances, bonding – how the invisible structure of materials controls how they behave, patterns in the elements – the periodic table, practical procedures – learning some of the key procedures chemists use and how they work.

**Physics:** Looks at how to understand the universe at the biggest scales (the universe) down to the tiniest imaginable. The course will give you access to the key ideas of physics you need to explore further. It will broaden your knowledge of how forces and energy drive changes and movement, how sound and light spread information and a really deep understanding of how electricity actually powers the modern world.



## EXAMINATION BOARD

Edexcel

## ASSESSMENT

Component 1 (60%)

Personal portfolio

Component 2 (40%)

External Assignment

## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Ms F Sealey

Francesca.Sealey@oasisshirleypark.org

The GCSE Art and Design course has been designed to provide students with the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of Art and Design learned at Key Stage 3.

It is suitable for students who wish to develop their **skills and interest in Art** and Design and lays the foundation for post 16 studies. The skills required for this GCSE are:

- An enthusiasm for the subject.
- The capacity to **explore, investigate and develop ideas**.
- The ability to develop artistic skills in a range of media.
- Independence and self-motivation is vital
- An interest in seeing works of art at first hand.
- The ability to meet deadlines and manage time effectively.
- The literacy skills necessary to present written ideas.

All students work from a given theme, which will initially be explored together; working from observation, researching artists, exploring materials and new techniques. Students then develop their own ideas inspired by the theme, finalising in a **refined piece or series of work**.

Over the course, two units are completed. Regular homework will be set and forms a crucial part of the course. Hardworking, enthusiastic and open minded students are welcomed onto this course.



## EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA

## ASSESSMENT

Coursework (60%)

Paper 1 (40%)

## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Ms J Hill

Jennifer.hill@oasisshirleypark.org

The aim of this course is to inform your development as a creative and artistic individual, broaden your aesthetic, social, cultural experience, as well as **generate a holistic engagement** with dance.

The topics we cover are performance, **dance appreciation** (in which we study six professional works and critique them accordingly), and choreography.

The six works studied in the course are *A Linha Curva*, *Emancipation of Expressionism*, *Within her Eyes*, *Artificial Things*, *Shadows*, and *Infra*.

60 percent of this GCSE is made up of coursework. Within this, students will need to perform two solo pieces, one duet/trio, and generate a piece of choreographed dance. To achieve these high standards, we ask for the following from our students:

- **Dedication to our subject**
- The ability to work independently *and* as a team
- **Creativity and technique**
- Organisation
- The desire to succeed





## EXAMINATION BOARD

WJEC

## ASSESSMENT

Component 1 (40%)

Student devised piece

Component 2 (20%)

Scripted performance

Component 3 (40%)

Written exam

## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr Y Philip

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GCSE Drama is an exciting, inspiring and above all practical course. There is a tendency to believe that drama is only for those wish to be actors, but this is incredibly wide of the mark. You are not learning just how to be a better actor, instead you will be **building a skillset** (confidence, resilience, critical analysis, problem solving, citizenship and so much more) that you cannot buy or suddenly manufacture when you get older.

This subject offers a broad and coherent course of study enabling you to understand the social, cultural and historical contexts of theatre across several periods developing a **range of theatrical skills**. Skills for approaching text and interpreting character from page-to-stage will be developed over the course through scene study and exploring a range of practitioners and styles and their approach to theatre. Students will have numerous opportunities to **create their own pieces of theatre** from various stimuli as well as their own screen recorded performance. course is tailored to our student's interests so if you love drama and theatre but prefer the backstage or technical side (set design, lighting, sound, costume, hair and make up) you can be assessed on this instead of acting.

There will be many opportunities each year to take leading roles in school productions as actors, stage mangers, directors and designers. Students will have the opportunity to perform in nationally co-ordinated performances which will be prioritised foremost for GCSE students. Additionally, the course provides opportunities to attend GCSE only live theatre performances and potential trips abroad to see theatre in different cultures.

'Drama can help you be more confident and explore and discover talents you never thought you had and help give you a voice' -**Aaron Makanda, Year 13**



EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA

ASSESSMENT

Listening exam (25%)

Reading exam (25%)

Speaking exam (25%)

Writing exam (25%)

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Ms E Thompson

Edleena.ceres@oasisshirleypark.org

Students studying French GCSE at Shirley Park should acquire the key **vocabulary and structures** to enable them to communicate with French-speakers in the real world. We want our students to be able to speak spontaneously and to become confident communicators. It is our hope that they will be able to use these language skills throughout their lives. We also hope that studying another language sparks an interest, curiosity and **love for other cultures**.

Above all, a willingness to make an effort, an acceptance that making mistakes are a part of learning and willingness to keep trying in spite of the challenges is essential. A good language learner will always accept the challenge, roll up their sleeves and, most importantly, will **enjoy the challenge!**

Ultimately, in many jobs, languages give students that added ‘edge’ to secure their career path. Languages offer a wide range of opportunities from using languages in: Travel, Tourism and Hospitality (pilot, stewards, travel agent, restaurant manager, hotel manager); in Interpreting and translating (legal interpreting, medical interpreting, TV, journalism, editing); in National Security (MI5, GCHQ); in law and business as well as roles in education and government.





## EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA

## ASSESSMENT

### Paper 1 – Living with the Physical Environment (35%)

The Challenge of Natural Hazards  
The Living World  
Physical Landscapes in the UK

### Paper 2 – Challenges in the Human Environment (35%)

Urban Issues and Challenges  
The Changing Economic World  
The Challenge of Resource Management

### Paper 3 – Geographical Applications (30%)

Issue Evaluation  
Fieldwork

## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Ms P Head

Philippa.head@oasisshirleypark.org

This exciting and relevant course studies geography in a balanced framework of **physical and human themes** and investigates the link between them. Students will travel the world from their classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom (UK), higher income countries (HICs), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs).

Topics of study include **climate change, poverty, deprivation**, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

The geography specification builds on literacy and numeracy skills throughout. The course also helps to develop key **geographical skills** which are used for assessment, including decision-making, analysis and evaluation skills. These are put further to the test during active fieldwork studies. The GCSE includes two separate days of fieldwork. This will include visits offsite and a full day of urban investigation.

The **GCSE course supports progression to A Level**, as the compulsory and optional topic content gives students the opportunity to lay a foundation of knowledge and understanding that can be further developed at A Level. It also provides skills which can be further developed on BTEC National courses such as Travel and Tourism or can be used in other vocational or work based placements.

Geography provides a solid foundation in a range of different skills, which are highly valued by employers and can therefore lead to a wide range of job opportunities.





EXAMINATION BOARD  
Edexcel

ASSESSMENT

**Paper 1**  
Crime and Punishment in Britain, 1000-today

**Paper 2A**  
Early Elizabethan England, 1558-88

**Paper 2B**  
Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91

**Paper 3**  
The USA, 1954-75: Conflict at home and abroad

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT  
Mr A. Strachan

Andrew.Strachan@oasisshirleypark.org

Our History GCSE builds on the foundation of knowledge set out during students time at KS3. And just as we build on the knowledge that students received during this section of their education, so too do we build on the larger ideas of change over time, cause and consequence, historical significance, and evidence and interpretation.

Our GCSE course starts with a return to some familiar territory – the Saxons and Normans. We don’t remain there for long, however, because we are moving through time quickly. In fact, our first course will cover **1000 years of history**, stopping off at many of the most famous moments and landmarks in our countries history. As we do this, we will be thinking specifically about how crimes and their punishment have changed over time.

This course is followed by a study of **early Elizabethan England**. Here, we go deep, investigating the nature of Elizabeth’s time as Queen, her conflict with Spain, the adventuring and exploring of England’s pirates, as well as the religious changes that shook the country.

Next, we move onto the **Cold War**. This fascinating part of our world history is characterised by tension and conflict. During the Cold War, the USA and Russia were almost constantly on the verge of a nuclear war that would have ended the world as we know it. In this course, we explore how and why this came about, as well as the major moments within it.

And finally, we will study the USA’s **civil rights movement and conflict in Vietnam**. In doing so, we will explore the themes of protest and resistance, and trace the story of freedom in America.



## EXAMINATION BOARD

BTEC

## ASSESSMENT

### Component 1

Exploring music products and styles

### Component 2

Music skills development

### Component 3

Responding to a musical brief

## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr T Lancaster

Tom.lancaster@oasisshirleypark.org

Music is one of the most exciting choices available going into Year 9. From organising and performing in live shows to opportunities to perform in Paris, music students are given unique opportunities to learn, **develop and enjoy music** in a way no other course can offer. By choosing this vocational music course, you join a strong community of engaged pupils who are passionate about creating music.

Our Music course is so much more than just working in a classroom... as a music student, you will learn to **compose and perform** in a wide range of styles to help you become a confident, creative and versatile musician. Studying music will enable you to pursue your personal music ambitions, including access to pathways into a whole range of future study/career choices within the music and creative industries. Crucial skills you will be develop include:

- Musical: e.g. fluency, accuracy, expression, confidence.
- Technical: e.g. professional technique on chosen instrument and/or voice.
- Interpersonal: e.g. teamwork, cooperation, communication.
- Self-management: e.g. focus, organisation, planning, meeting deadlines.
- Health and safety: e.g. preventing accidents, working carefully, analysing risks.
- Knowledge: e.g. understand how music is constructed from a range of cultures and styles'





## EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA

## ASSESSMENT

Coursework (10%)

Practical Performance (30%)

Paper 1 (30%)

The Human Body

Paper 2 (30%)

Socio-cultural influences

## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr M Adolphe

Max.adolphe@oasisshirleypark.org

The aim of this course is to develop knowledge, understanding, skills and values to develop and maintain performance in physical activities, develop understanding and **knowledge of the human body** and how it moves, and understand the benefits to health, fitness and well-being.

The skills required for the AQA GCSE PE course require strong **practical performance** in a range of different individual and team sports, analysis and evaluation skills, **independent researching skills** and the ability to present knowledge in a range of formats (PowerPoint, Word etc.).

The topics that we cover are:

- Applied anatomy and physiology.
- Movement analysis.
- Physical training.
- Use of data.
- Sport psychology.
- Social cultural influences.
- Health, fitness and well-being.





## EXAMINATION BOARD

OCR

## ASSESSMENT

**R180**

Reducing the risk of sports injuries and dealing with common medical conditions

**R181**

Applying the principles of training

Option unit 1

## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr M Adolphe

Max.adolphe@oasisshirleypark.org

Our Cambridge National in Sport Science will encourage students to think for themselves about the scientific world of sport whilst putting those theories and concepts into practice in both theoretical and practical sport situations.

**R180:** In this unit you will learn how to prepare participants to take part in sport and physical activity in a way which minimises the risk of injuries occurring; prepare them to be able to respond to common injuries that can occur during sport and physical activity and to recognise the symptoms of some common medical conditions.

**R181:** In this unit you will learn how to conduct a range of fitness tests, what they test and their advantages and disadvantages. You will also learn how to design, plan and evaluate a fitness training programme. This will give you the background knowledge you need to be able to plan and deliver appropriate fitness tests, some of which will be adapted to suit the skills of the sporting activity. You will then interpret the data collected from fitness tests and learn how best to feed this back so that participants can go on to make informed decisions about their fitness training.

**R182:** In this unit you will learn to understand how both the cardio-respiratory and Musculo-skeletal systems provide you with the energy and movements needed to keep you exercising and in turn how exercise helps develop both systems.

**R183:** In this unit you will learn to consider the composition of healthy, balanced nutrition. You will consider the necessity of certain nutrients and their role in enabling effective performance in different sporting activities. The knowledge gained will be used to produce an appropriate, effective nutrition plan for a performer.



## EXAMINATION BOARD

Eduqas Route A

## ASSESSMENT

### Component 1

Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies in the Modern World

### Component 2

Study of Christianity

### Component 3

Study of a World Faith: Buddhism

## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Ms A. Arseculeratne

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park.org

This exciting new GCSE option - Religious Studies (RS) – provides students with the opportunity to engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth and their influence on human lives and societies. **RS enables students to develop an instrumental set of transferable skills**, which will be invaluable throughout their secondary schooling as well as afterwards. These include the skills of critical thinking and self-reflection, as well as the ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced oral and written arguments. This course builds on the foundation of knowledge students acquire throughout KS3 through larger enquiry questions approached through the disciplines of philosophy, theology are social science. These include **questions about what it means to be human, what faith stories tell us about supernatural entities, how we know what we know, whether we can convincingly argue that God exists**, whether there is a purpose to human suffering, and whether religion can generate social justice.

Our GCSE course begins with Component 1- an exploration of relationships, life and death, good and evil, and human rights viewed through the lenses of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism as well as through Non-Religious perspectives. It then moves on to explore the study, beliefs, and teachings of Christianity for Component 2, after which it explores the beliefs, teachings, and practices of Buddhism for Component 3. Both Components 2 and 3 explore common and **divergent views within these world faiths, the basis for beliefs, teachings, and practices, and the relevant sources of wisdom** and authority including scripture and/or sacred texts.

Ultimately, this course will equip students with essential academic and personal skills, a well-rounded view of various religious traditions, and a platform to begin a thorough exploration of some of the enduring questions of humanity.



EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA

ASSESSMENT

Listening exam (25%)

Reading exam (25%)

Speaking exam (25%)

Writing exam (25%)

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Ms E Thompson

Edleena.ceres@oasisshirleypark.org

Students studying Spanish GCSE at Shirley Park should acquire the key vocabulary and structures to enable them to communicate with **Spanish-speakers in the real world**. We want our students to be able to speak spontaneously in Spanish and to become confident communicators.

It is our hope that they will be able to use these language skills throughout their lives. We also hope that studying another language sparks an interest, curiosity and **love for other cultures**.

Above all, a willingness to make an effort, an acceptance that making mistakes are a part of learning and willingness to keep trying in spite of the challenges is essential. A good language learner will always accept the challenge, roll up their sleeves and, most importantly, will **enjoy the challenge!**

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## EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA

## ASSESSMENT

Students will sit 6 exams – the same number as combined science students. However, each exam is 30 minutes longer.

Students will be awarded 3 separate science GCSEs.

## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr R. Owen

Robert.Owen@oasisshirleypark.org

Triple science allows you to study a wider range of exciting topics than our core “combined science” course. Triple science is not a harder course but it will introduce those interested in science to a wider range of topics and ideas and provide more opportunities to explore the practical and investigative side of the subject.

Triple science is worth three GCSE’s (with separate grades for chemistry, Physics and biology) when our “combined” course is worth two GCSEs. Both triple and combined are offered at higher and foundation tier and suitable for the majority of students. Topics only covered for students taking “triple” science as an option.

### Space physics:

We explore how science is discovering more and more about the nature of the universe. Learning about our solar system, the life cycle of stars and evidence for the expansion of the universe.

### A deeper knowledge of human biology:

Triple students will dive deeper into the workings of the human body studying how our bodies work and our responses to disease in much more depth. Taking triple will give you a more rounded understanding of the science of the Covid-19 pandemic and how our bodies fight off infection.

### Using chemistry:

Triple scientists will study the chemistry of batteries and how they produce power. There is a much more extensive practical offer with more opportunities to develop your skills in the lab with an extended range of required and additional practical sessions.

Triple scientists will also study the topics from the combined science course but with additional examples in key areas like ecology and chemical change. With the additional lesson time there is more time to explore topics from combined practically and build a deeper appreciation of how the “big ideas” of science give us an explanation for much of what we experience - from the variety of life to why we can't travel back in time.



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