



# Chetham's

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

## Chetham's School of Music

Long Millgate

Manchester

M3 158

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

Joint Principals: Ms Nicola Smith & Mr Tom Redmond

Vice Principal: Mrs Julia Harrison

Chair of Governors: Mr Malcolm Edge

# Key Stage 4 Curriculum Handbook

2026-27

Years 10 & 11

## Contents

Introduction	3
Art	5
Drama	6
English	7
Geography	8
German and French	9
History	10
Mathematics	11
Music in the Curriculum	12
Personal Social and Health Education	13
Science	14
Option Form (to be completed)	15

## Introduction

We aim to offer our students as broad an education as possible until the end of Year 9 but the greater depth required for GCSE work and an increase in the demands of music and instrumental work require students, upon entering Year 10, to make a choice in the number of subjects studied.

### Core Curriculum

In line with national specifications, but with modifications which take into account our specialist nature, all of our students in Years 10 and 11 take these subjects at GCSE:

Music

English (Language and Literature) Maths

Science (Double Award)

### Subject Options

Students can choose two subjects from the following options, with some restrictions as noted after the list:

Art, Drama, French, Geography, German, History

Students can take two subjects, but they cannot include these combinations:

Geography and History

French and German

Art and Drama

In Art and Drama, some practical elements of the courses need to be covered 'off-timetable' in the students' own time.

### Chetham's Curriculum

In addition, all students will attend the following timetabled activities/lessons between 8.30am and 4.30pm:

Timetabled instrumental work and practice	minimum 7 hours per week*
Physical Education	1 hour per week
Personal Social and Health Education (no exam, see page 15)	1 hour per week
Choir	½ hour per week
Tutor Period/Assembly	1 hour per week

(\* plus a minimum of 7 hours evening and Saturday morning commitment).

### Other advice

Once individual choices are clear, then your workload, academic and musical, is discussed by the Head of Instrumental Department and Head of Middle School, following which recommendations are made regarding academic subjects. The aim is to strike a balance between musical progress and academic commitment. If a subject has too few students opting for it, it may not run, and you will be asked to choose a different subject in its place. As a small school with small teaching rooms, class sizes do have limits and if these are reached, we normally use a "first come, first served" policy so we would advise prompt return of the options form to ensure your child can have their preferred options.

The Learning Support Department supports students who have any specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities; have Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP); or have English as a Second Language. Lessons are predominantly 1:1 with some in-class support.

Year 10 students will sit the Yellis baseline test, for which no preparation is required, during one timetabled academic lesson.

### PRESENT STUDENTS

Parents or carers should use the online link on page 15 to submit options. If there are problems, you should speak to me. The closing date for replies is Friday 17 April 2026. An online options meeting will take place on Tuesday 24 March 2026 at 6pm to discuss any queries regarding options for Year 10.

### NEW STUDENTS

Parents or carers should use the online link on page 15 to submit GCSE options

Please feel free to contact me as Head of Middle School via email [ambrosehenderson@chethams.com](mailto:ambrosehenderson@chethams.com) if you have any queries about the GCSE programme or your child's option choices.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Henderson', written over a horizontal line.

Mr A Henderson - Head of Middle School  
Spring 2026

## Art & Design

Head of Department: Mrs A Boothroyd

Exam Board: AQA (Art & Design)

### Exam

The Art & Design course is a broad course that will explore practical and critical/contextual work through a range of 2D and/or 3D processes. It will enable students to develop their creative ideas as well as expanding their knowledge of art, craft and design techniques.

This is a two-year course culminating in an exhibition of selected coursework, the 'Portfolio of Work' worth 60% and work from the exam, the 'Externally Set Assignment', which is worth 40%.

Each student must select and present a portfolio of work. The portfolio must include both:

1. **A sustained project** developed in response to a subject, theme, task or brief evidencing the journey from initial engagement with an idea(s) to the realisation of intentions. This will give students the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills, and/or understanding from across their course of study.
2. **A selection of further work** resulting from activities such as trials and experiments; skills-based workshops; mini and/or foundation projects; responses to gallery, museum or site visits; work placements; independent study and evidence of the student's specific role in any group work undertaken.

Students will be able to explore the following areas:

Fine Art: Painting and drawing,  
Mixed media, including collage and assemblage  
Sculpture, with wire, clay, mod roc and paper sculpture  
Printmaking: relief/collagraph, dry point, mono print and poly print  
Photography as part of recording ideas and insights

Textiles: Printed and/or dyed materials, including Batik and collage

Three-Dimensional Design: Sculpture, including wire, withies, mod roc and card  
Jewellery/Body Adornment

Drawing, using a wide variety of media, will be important and essential to show throughout the whole course, enabling students to develop their ideas into their chosen area. Writing in the form of annotations and analysis of their own work and the work of others is also an important requirement of the course.

## Drama

Head of Department: Mrs J Sherlock

### Exam Board: Cambridge iGCSE

Through practical and theoretical study, learners develop an understanding and enjoyment of drama, developing group and individual skills and studying ways to communicate ideas and feelings to an audience. They learn how to discover the performance possibilities of a text and other stimuli, and devise dramatic material of their own. Learners also develop their performance skills, the demonstration of which will form part of the final assessment.

#### All candidates take:

- **Component 1**  
Written Examination based on two scripted extracts and devised work completed for component 2. Candidates answer **all** questions in Section A and **all** questions in Section B and **two** questions from Section C.  
Externally assessed.  
80 marks  
2 hours 30 minutes - 40%
- **Component 2**  
Coursework 60% - 120 marks

#### Candidates submit:

- one individual performance based on an extract from a play
- one group performance based on an extract from a play
- one group performance of an original devised piece

Internally assessed and externally moderated.

## English

Head of Department: Ms C Raffo  
Staff: Mrs J Harrison  
Mrs L Jones  
Mrs A Sanderson-Leigh

Exam Board: CIE IGCSE

Students are entered for the Cambridge IGCSEs in both English Language and English Literature. Over two years, we teach Language and Literature as an integrated course though they are examined separately, and candidates receive two qualifications. Our commitment to this course also reflects the Department's belief that the teaching of literature is central to all language development.

### IGCSE: First Language English (0990)

Candidates are prepared for two terminal examinations, developing their reading and writing skills through constant practice in reading both literary and non-literary texts and producing discursive, descriptive and narrative writing. Early entry examination (Oct/Nov of Year 11) is favoured depending on the cohort, as well as on term dates.

#### Paper 1: Reading Passages (2 hours)

A reading paper in which students must demonstrate their ability to comprehend, infer, analyse and explore as well as their ability to summarise material. They are also assessed on their ability to respond to such material through their own writing.

#### Paper 2: Directed Writing and composition (2 hours)

Candidates are required to evaluate two passages of non-fictional writing and create their own piece directed by the exam board e.g. a magazine article or a speech. In the second section of the paper, they may choose between descriptive or narrative writing.

### IGCSE English Literature (0992)

Candidates are also entered for two external Literature examinations:

#### Paper 1: Poetry and Prose (1hr 30 mins)

Candidates must answer:

- a question on a prose text, and
- a question on a poem from a collection studied from the CIE anthology *Songs of Ourselves*.

Unlike other exam boards, CIE changes the set text choices every 2-3 years; currently, it is Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird* but this will change for 2028 examinations.

#### Paper 2: Drama and unseen paper (2 hours)

An open text exam on a piece of drama: *An Inspector Calls*  
one question on either an unseen prose extract or a poem.

## Geography

Head of Department: Mr A Kyle  
Staff: Miss R Booth

### Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel, IGCSE

The Pearson Edexcel IGCSE allows students to develop a knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts and an appreciation of the relevance of these concepts to our changing world. It will also develop them as independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers.

Although coursework is not a requirement of the IGCSE the specification encourages fieldwork to underpin students' geographical knowledge and understanding. Several fieldwork opportunities will be pursued throughout the course, primarily through a residential field course in the Lake District.

IGCSE Geography counts as a humanities subject for the E Bacc (English Baccalaureate). The specification provides an excellent basis for students wishing to study Geography at A level.

#### Overview of content:

##### **Section A - The natural environment and people**

Two of the following three topics will be studied:

1. River environments
2. Coastal environments
3. Hazardous environments

##### **Section B - People and their environments**

Two of the following three topics will be studied:

4. Economic activity and energy
5. Ecosystems and rural environments
6. Urban environments

##### **Section C - Practical Geography Enquiry**

The development of practical geographical enquiry skills related to the investigation of each selected topic from sections A and B.

##### **Section D - Global issues**

At least one of the following three topics will be studied:

7. Fragile environments
8. Globalisation and migration
9. Development and human welfare

#### Overview of assessment:

The assessment of this qualification is through two examination papers (Paper 1 - 1 hour and 10 minutes; Paper 2 - 1 hour and 45 minutes) at the end of the two-year course. There is no coursework requirement.

## German and French

Head of Department: Ms N Geschwendt (German)  
Staff: Mr P Chillingworth (French)  
Mr M Jacobs (French)  
Mrs R Jordan (German)  
German & French Language Assistants

### Exam Board: AQA

To be equipped linguistically and academically to face the 21st Century, proficiency in a language or languages is what you need, especially post-Brexit! Studying a Modern Language gives you an insight into life in other countries and even continents, as well as that necessary edge when it comes to competition in the labour market and is particularly important for those planning a career as an international musician.

The general aims of the course are: -

- to develop the student's ability to use the language effectively for purposes of practical communication, both oral and written;
- to form a sound basis for the skills required for further study;
- to offer an insight into the culture and civilisation of German-/French speaking countries;
- to provide enjoyment and stimulation in the process of language-learning.

The emphasis of the GCSE course is very much on communication. The aim is to develop language skills in a variety of contexts. On completion of the course, students will be able to visit German and French speaking countries and confidently deal with most everyday situations. Learning grammar is also important, because it equips students with the necessary grammatical skills to enable them to pursue German or French at A-level. It is assessed through quality of language marks for speaking and writing, but also through translation into and out of the language.

The course content is as follows:

#### People and lifestyle

- Identity and relationships with others
- Healthy living and lifestyle
- Education and work

#### Popular Culture

- Free time activities
- Customs, festival, celebrations
- Celebrity culture

#### Communication and the world around us

- Travel and tourism
- Media and technology
- The environment and where people live

The course books used are endorsed by AQA, but we also use a wide variety of supplementary online, written and audio-visual material. We also encourage our students to watch foreign films, to use online resources, and to take part in extracurricular activities.

For the purposes of the GCSE, students must acquire the four main skills of language learning: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, and each skill is worth 25% of the final award. Each skill is examined separately at the end of the course in a terminal exam.

Practically, all of our students are entered for the Higher Tier (grades 9-4).

## History

Head of Humanities: Mr A Kyle  
Staff: Mrs S Cox

### Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel, IGCSE

The Pearson Edexcel History IGCSE allows students to develop a knowledge and understanding of selected periods and aspects of history, exploring the significance of historical events, people, changes and issues. It will also develop students' ability to use historical sources critically, enabling them to draw conclusions and make historical judgements.

IGCSE History counts as a humanities subject for the E Bacc (English Baccalaureate). The specification provides an excellent basis for students wishing to study History at A-level.

#### Overview of content:

The specification focuses on 'The Modern World' with topics on Europe, the USA, and the changing nature of warfare c.1919-2011.

#### Section A

Students will study **two depth studies**:

1. Development of dictatorship: Germany 1918-1945
2. Dictatorship and conflict in Russia 1924-1953

#### Section B

Students carry out an historical investigation of the USA, 1918-1941

#### Section C

Students complete a breadth study of the changing nature of warfare, c.1919-2011.

#### Overview of assessment:

The assessment of this qualification is through two 1.5-hour examination papers.

Paper 1 on Section A

Paper 2 on Sections B and C

Both exams are taken at the end of the two-year course.

There is no coursework requirement.

## Mathematics

Head of Department: Mr E Leeson  
Staff: Dr A Clow  
Ms C Dackombe

### Exam Board: Edexcel

During Year 10 and 11 the topics covered build on previous work, continuing to follow the scheme of work for the GCSE started in Year 9. The course aims to allow and encourage the development of:

- A positive approach to mathematics, including confidence, enjoyment and perseverance.
- An appreciation of the place of mathematics in society
- An ability to think mathematically, precisely, logically, and creatively
- A willingness and ability to work independently and co-operatively
- An ability to understand mathematical ideas and to communicate them in a variety of modes
- An appreciation of the ways mathematics is used
- An appreciation of the interdependence of different branches of mathematics
- The knowledge, skills and understanding needed to apply a range of mathematical concepts to situations which may arise in everyday life
- The skill to investigate mathematical ideas and to test and prove hypotheses
- A firm foundation for appropriate further study.

The assessment takes place at the end of Year 11. It consists of three 1½ hour written papers, one being non-calculator and the other two requiring the use of a scientific calculator.

There are two tiers of entry, Foundation and Higher. Students are taught in differentiated sets and will be entered for the level that best suits their ability. At higher level students will be able to achieve grade 4-9 and at foundation, grades 1-5. Foundation students will study the Edexcel iGCSE which has two papers, both calculator.

## Music

Head of Music in the Curriculum:	Dr S King
Coordinator of Sixth Form Academic Music:	Dr S Oliver
Coordinator of Lower School Academic Music:	Mrs A Price
Staff:	Miss R Aldred
	Miss E Black
	Mr D Mason
	Dr S Murphy

### Exam Board: Edexcel

All students take class music in the Middle School. Most will begin the Edexcel GCSE course at the start of Year 10 and take the examination at the end of Year 11. A small group of students may be ready to begin the course in Year 9 and take the examination in Year 10, thus enabling them to start A-level studies in Year 11.

The GCSE elements of listening, composing, performing and acquiring knowledge of music are the foundation of work in the Middle School, united by an aural approach to all aspects of the course. Composing (30% of the total marks) and performing (30% of the total marks) are assessed through coursework assignments in the second year of the course. A written examination (40% of the total marks) will be taken at the end of Year 11; this will test students' knowledge of set works taken from four broad areas of study, their ability to recognise musical elements and techniques and their ability to relate unfamiliar music to the context of the areas of study.

### Instrumental Music 1700-1820

BACH Brandenburg Concerto No. 5, third movement

BEETHOVEN Piano Sonata in C minor '*Pathetique*', first movement

### Vocal Music

PURCELL *Music for a While*

QUEEN *Killer Queen*

### Music for Stage and Screen

SCHWARZ '*Defying Gravity*' from *Wicked*

WILLIAMS Main title/rebel blockade runner from the soundtrack to *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*

### Fusions

AFRO-CELTIC SOUND SYSTEM *Release*

ESPERANZA SPALDING *Samba em Preludio*

### Non-Exam Assessments (60%, internally marked)

**Composition (30%)** Two assignments - 1 to a set brief, 1 free composition (minimum total 3 minutes)

**Performing (30%)** 1 solo and 1 ensemble performance (minimum total 4 minutes)

Study in the Middle School extends beyond the standard required for GCSE: students follow a course in harmony (including simple keyboard skills) which progresses from a basic level of understanding towards more sophisticated techniques. This is intended to give students important skills which will underpin their composition, score reading and analysis and help them make the transition from GCSE to A Level. Students in the Middle School will also have the opportunity to work with the Music Technology facilities. This will include an introduction to simple sequencing and to the basics of recording technique. A one-hour choir period (the whole of Years 9-11 split into two choirs) completes the Academic Music programme.

## Personal Social and Health Education

Head of Department: Mr A Kyle  
PSHE Co-ordinator: Mrs S Cox  
Staff: Ms N Geschwendt  
Mr M Jacobs  
Miss R Booth

PSHE is an amalgamation of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE), Citizenship and Religious Education.

In Years 10 and 11 one 1hr lesson per week is provided.  
The main topics covered are:

### Year10

- Alcohol / smoking / vaping / drugs: misuse and sources of support
- Sex and relationships: love, emotions, unhealthy relationships, contraception, parenting, bereavement, abortion, miscarriage
- Informed lifestyle choices: sleep/ diet/ exercise
- Government and democracy: The UK Parliament
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Developing values

### Year 11

- Teenage cancer: breast, testicular, general
- E-safety: online reputation / the law/ personal data
- The criminal justice system
- Career choices and employability
- Revision strategies
- Moving on: personal risks / dealing with unwanted attention
- Health-related decisions: transplants/ transfusions/ tattoos/ self-examination checks
- Economic wellbeing: borrowing and debt, insurance, risk, consumer choices
- Social influences

\*Topics are revisited as appropriate, the overall aim being to accrue knowledge, skills and understanding that further the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of each student.

In addition to the taught lessons, students will participate in events organised by outside agencies including It Happens and Elevate.

## Science

Head of Department: Mr A Henderson (Biology)  
Staff: Mr J Blundell (Physics)  
Mr C Davidson (Physics/General Sciences)  
Mrs C Shiells (Chemistry)  
Ms E Storey (Biology/General Science)

Exam Board: AQA

All students study the AQA Combined Science: Trilogy specification (8464). Students commence their GCSE studies in Y9. They receive three hours of Science in Years 9-11.

Double science: AQA Combined Science: Trilogy (8464)

This course allows progression to the A-level courses in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The course is more than adequate preparation for A-level in any of the sciences.

It provides a more detailed and in-depth study of science. The specification is assessed by six written papers, two written papers for each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics and all contributing the same amount (16.7%) to the overall grades. Two grades are awarded, and the 9-1 scale is used.

All exams are 1 hr 15 mins in duration. The specification requires that 21 core practicals are covered across the three sciences during the course and understanding of these practicals and the scientific method behind them is then assessed in the written papers. Such questions account for 15% of the total marks. Of course, students are likely to carry out not only these practicals but many others during the course of the two years.

## OPTION FORM

Please use the Microsoft Forms link below to complete option choices by no later than FRIDAY 17 APRIL 2026

[GCSE Options form Spring 2026 - Fill out form](#)

QR Code for Options form

