



ABINGDON

MIDDLE SCHOOL

CURRICULUM

September 2012

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Introduction

This booklet provides an introduction to the Middle School curriculum at Abingdon School. It covers the main academic subjects in the third, fourth and fifth years, together with topics such as personal, social and health education, physical education and sport, and careers education. It does not deal, however, with the ethos of the school, or the pastoral system.

After a brief introduction to the curriculum, the pattern of subjects in the third, fourth and fifth years is outlined in two tables. Finally more detailed information about academic subjects and other topics are given, together with contact details of the relevant Head of Department.

Outline

The Middle School is comprised of the third year, fourth year and fifth year (National Curriculum Years 9 to 11). The third year is a foundation year, in which we integrate our intake from the Lower School and from preparatory schools, and begin in earnest the majority of GCSE courses. In the fourth and fifth years pupils pursue a more limited range of subjects for GCSE, with an increasing proportion of coursework as the GCSE courses progress.

Set sizes

Pupils are taught in sets of twenty, on average. In some subjects, such as the top Mathematics sets, and in History and Geography in the options blocks, set sizes may be larger than this. On the other hand, in the lower mathematics sets, the languages, and the practical subjects, such as Art, Music, Design and Technology and Drama, they are smaller.

Assessment and Reporting

Each half term, teachers complete a report that summarises a pupil's academic progress, which is sent to his parents. Each year there is a parents' evening, at which the staff meet the parents face-to-face to discuss progress. There are internal examinations in June in both the third and fourth years. GCSE mock examinations take place in the January of the fifth year. In common with the majority of independent schools, we do not enter our pupils for the government's key stage three tests.

Distinctive features of the Abingdon curriculum

Several distinctive features of the Abingdon curriculum require some emphasis.

In the first place boys may choose whether to study three separate sciences to GCSE or to take "dual award science" (Science and Additional Science). This choice is based on a pupil's interest in science since the dual award scientists spend fewer periods per week studying science. This allows dual award scientists to timetable an additional optional subject for GCSE. This choice is discussed more fully in the SCIENCE section later in this document.

Secondly, in PSHE lessons and in tutor time we have some additional teaching in both careers and in personal and social education, done by specialists.

At each stage there are optional choices to be made. The relationship between the optional and compulsory subjects is shown for each of the year groups in the tables on subsequent pages.

Pupils are set by ability when this is appropriate, particularly in Mathematics, the Sciences, and Modern Languages. Attention is paid to differentiation; that is, trying to ensure that all the pupils in a set are stimulated at a level relevant to their ability. In many subjects we enrich the GCSE curriculum with topics beyond the syllabus.

In the third year, all pupils study Art & Design and Design & Technology. These subjects become optional in the fourth and fifth years.

For further information about the curriculum please contact the Director of Studies.

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February 2012

Pattern of subjects

This is the pattern of subjects proposed for the 2012/13 timetable. Lessons are 55 minutes in duration.

Third year (National Curriculum year 9)

Six groups, of about 22 boys, are taught in the same sets for English, History, Geography, Religious Studies, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Boys are allocated sets based on ability in mathematics, and in French after one term. There are two option blocks.

Compulsory subjects		lessons per fortnight
	English	5
	Mathematics	5
	Biology	2
	Chemistry	2
	Physics	3
	Main language (French for most, German for some from lower school)	4
	History	4
	Geography	4
	Religious studies	4
	Art & Design	2
	Design Technology	2
	Personal, Social and Health Education	1
	Physical education	2
Optional subjects: Two to be chosen from:		4 for each
	Latin or Classical Civilisation	
	Second languages started from scratch: German, French, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese and Greek	
	Drama	
	Music	

Fourth and fifth years (National Curriculum years 10 & 11)

Compulsory Subjects:		Fourth Year (lessons per fortnight)	Fifth Year (lessons per fortnight)
	English and English Literature	6	6
	Mathematics	6	6
	Biology	5 (3 dual award)	5 (4 dual award)
	Chemistry	5 (3 dual award)	5 (3 dual award)
	Physics	4 (3 dual award)	5 (3 dual award)
	Main MFL (French, German or Spanish)	5	5
	Personal, Social and Health Education	1	
	Physical education	1	1
Optional Subjects: Separate scientists choose three Dual award scientists choose four		5 for each	5 for each
	Geography		
	History		
	Religious Studies		
	Latin or Classical Civilisation		
	Second languages: German, French, Spanish, Mandarin		
	Chinese and Greek		
	Electronics		
	Music		
	Art & Design		
	Design & Technology		
	Drama		

Boys are allocated sets based on ability in the sciences, Mathematics, modern languages and Latin.

Pupils doing all three separate sciences to GCSE make **three** subject choices from the option blocks. Those taking dual award science are still taught science by three separate specialist teachers, but have fewer science lessons each week, and gain only two science GCSEs (Science and Additional Science). Dual award science students make **four** subject choices from the option blocks. Within these four choices they must study at least one of History and Geography; (they may study both).

GCSE science is more fully discussed in the SCIENCE section later in this document.

Most combinations are possible, although unusual combinations may prove to be impossible to timetable.

ART & DESIGN

Edexcel GCSE Art & Design (2AD01)

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse09/Art/Pages/default.aspx>

Introduction

Art and Design develops personal expression, imagination, sensitivity, conceptual thinking, powers of observation, analytical abilities, and practical attitudes. We encourage work in a wide range of practices and approaches including painting and drawing, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, computer graphics and illustration. Put simply, the subject encourages thoughtful, imaginative creation through a balance of thinking, feeling and making.

The department has three main studios, equipped for painting, printmaking, and sculpture. A central resource area with a good library and a suite of Apple Macintosh computers give research and ICT facilities to whole teaching groups at a time. There is a separate studio for the upper sixth. The department has three full-time teachers, one part-time and a full-time technician, providing expertise in a wide range of disciplines.

The Courses

In the third year, all boys have a lesson a week of art. The aim is to give a broad but satisfying range of experiences and approaches to the subject, to develop skills and progress understanding. It is often a chance for boys to rethink their abilities and discover afresh an enthusiasm for creative work. The course should prove enjoyable as well as provide an insight into the skills required for GCSE art and design.

In the fourth year we offer a broad course in art, craft and design. Taught in 5 lessons over the two week cycle, the course allows students to develop work in a variety of media through a range of different approaches including drawing, printmaking, painting, sculpture, ceramics and graphic communication, informed by the example of other artists and designers. Which techniques and approaches you are taught will depend to a degree on which teacher takes your set. The course allows for increasing specialisation but we believe it's important that a wide range is explored at the start. We may be able to offer a specialist course in graphic communication from the start, depending on numbers and timetable constraints. Both courses would be suitable for those who eventually go onto A level art. When making art your choice please specify if you would like to do the graphics option.

We run regular trips to galleries and organise workshops with visiting artists and designers. Details of recent events may be viewed on the art and design pages of the school website.

http://www.abingdon.org.uk/art_and_design

The GCSE consists of two units. The first is a portfolio of work developed over the course to be submitted early in the Lent Term of the fifth year. The second is an externally set unit with a single starting point, the final piece of which, after almost a term of preparatory studies, has to be completed in ten hours. All the work is then marked internally and moderated by an external examiner who views an exhibition of the work in the school. Recent examination results have been excellent (69% of grades in the last 5 years were A* and A).

Boys thinking of careers in architecture or other design/creative areas should especially consider opting for art and design at GCSE. Most boys are capable of taking the subject through to A level if they wish. In the sixth form, boys combine A level art with a wide variety of other subjects and without detriment to their university applications in a wide range of subjects.

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CAREERS

The purpose of the careers education programme is to help pupils to make the most appropriate choices about their path into the world of work. This involves developing an understanding of their own individual skills and personality traits, as well as the opportunities available to them.

The heart of careers information is the Careers Library in Mercers Court, which contains a wide selection of resources on the range of occupations available, how to make informed choices about careers and university degrees, university prospectuses and gap year guides. All students in the middle and upper schools are welcome to drop in and browse during the school day. There is also a Careers section on the school study site, with links to a wide range of excellent web-based resources and to back issues of the regular careers newsletter. The newsletter is emailed to fifth years and sixth formers and primarily involves making students aware of upcoming careers-related events both in and out of school.

Tutors deliver the middle school careers education programme. The students follow a varied course throughout the three years, starting with opening students' eyes to the wide range of possibilities available and helping them to think about the types of skills and characteristics that make an individual suited to certain occupations. In the fourth year, the programme focuses more on helping students to consider their own future, and we use online profiling tests to help students start to research careers that might suit them. In the summer of the fourth year there is a whole day devoted to the development of teamwork and leadership skills in a business context, and most boys embark on the first stage of the ISCO Futurewise scheme (Independent Schools Careers Organisation).

As boys enter the fifth year the emphasis shifts towards preparing for work experience and how to apply for placements, as well as guiding them through making A level choices appropriate to their future career ideas. Early on in the fifth year, most boys have a detailed interview with an ISCO careers advisor to review the results of the profiling tests. The comprehensive report is then sent to parents, and the report and linked resources are available on the ISCO website with password access. Individual membership of ISCO lasts until the student is 23 years old and entitles them to a range of benefits, including career counselling and discounted courses. If they have not taken part in the scheme then they have a guidance interview with the Head of Careers.

We host an annual careers convention with St Helen and St Katharine's and Our Lady's. This is compulsory for all fifth years and most boys return in the sixth form. There are around sixty career representatives available for consultation, as well as presentations from panels of specialists in key career areas.

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CLASSICS

The classical subjects taught in the Middle School are Latin, Ancient Greek and Classical Civilisation. No classical subject is compulsory, but most pupils study at least one; the range of subjects offered is such that there should be something to interest and fulfil every pupil. Most of those who studied Latin in the Lower School opt to continue in the Middle School.

There are five full-time and one part-time classics staff, teaching in the departmental suite of rooms located in Little School. The department is keen to encourage pupils to see the importance of the study of the past to an understanding of the present, and to this end runs annual Classics trips abroad (recent destinations have included Provence, Tunisia, Italy, Greece, Sicily, Turkey and Crete) as well as trips to the British Museum and to Greek drama productions in Oxford and London. Pupils also attend GCSE conferences of relevance to set texts where possible, and speakers are regularly invited to the school to talk on a variety of associated topics.

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LATIN

OCR GCSE Latin (J281)

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/type/gcse/classics/latin/>

Latin is taught using the Cambridge Latin Course (CLC). The CLC prepares pupils well for the GCSE course, since it concentrates on language skills and the appreciation of literature, both of which are tested in the GCSE. By the end of the CLC pupils will have been exposed to all the grammar which they will need for GCSE, as well as having read a selection of the greatest Latin authors. The department also supplements the CLC with its own linguistic material, laying particular emphasis on the understanding of grammar.

Those pupils with more experience of Latin or exceptional ability are setted together, with the intention that they will be able to pursue a broader course of reading in the fourth year. The other sets are, however, of mixed ability.

The aim is to have completed the language element of the GCSE syllabus by the end of the fourth year. In this year, each set also begins to read real Latin literature, in preparation for the literary part of the GCSE. This is also an opportunity to study broader aspects of the Roman world, such as life in the city of Rome or the development of the Roman political system from republic to empire. The top set is able to pursue this reading in more depth, but by the end of the year all the boys are ready for the final year's work, irrespective of their previous experience.

The GCSE itself consists of four examined papers (there is no controlled assessment element). The first and second papers are language papers (50%), which test the candidate's linguistic competence with unseen translation and comprehension. For these papers there is a set vocabulary list, which we work towards learning gradually over the course. The other two papers are on set texts, one verse (25%) and one prose (25%). Pupils are expected to translate and comment upon their set authors. We expect almost all pupils who take the GCSE to achieve at least an A grade, and the large majority an A*.

ANCIENT GREEK

OCR GCSE Classical Greek (J291)

http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/type/gcse/classics/classical_greek/

Ancient Greek offers a demanding and very highly respected GCSE. The influence of the Greeks on our modern world is almost limitless: science, drama, philosophy, history, democracy, architecture and art are but a few of the areas which the ancient Greeks either invented or developed hugely. The GCSE course offers a window onto these ideas through the study of their language and some of their literature, a literature of almost unparalleled impact. Most pupils come to Greek, having previously started Latin, but this is not essential: it has been studied very successfully by non-Latinists.

Pupils may start Greek in the Third Year, the GCSE being taken in the Fifth Year. A handful of boys - those who have read Greek to scholarship standard or higher common entrance level already at preparatory school - choose to take "Express" Greek outside the timetable, sitting the GCSE at the end of the Fourth Year.

Pupils are taught using the new JACT course, which gives them a thorough grounding in grammar, and this is supplemented with the department's own material. As the course is shorter than Latin, with only three years to GCSE, it is not usually possible to read a selection of Greek authors before embarking on set texts, though the new course contains many passages from classical authors adapted to an appropriate level of difficulty.

The exam itself follows the same pattern as the Latin GCSE, with half the papers focused on language and half on literature. As in Latin, there is a set vocabulary for the language papers, and no controlled assessment. The literature papers provide the opportunity to study some of ancient Greece's great literature, such as Homer, in the original.

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

OCR GCSE Classical Civilisation (J280)

http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/type/gcse/classics/classical_civ/

Those who opt to start Classical Civilisation in the Third Year (currently about forty pupils a year) pursue a course devised by the department, which concentrates mainly on Greek topics. These include mythology, the Mycenaeans and Minoans, the Persian Wars, Athenian Democracy and Alexander the Great. On the Roman front, we also study Hadrian's Wall, and there is the opportunity to visit this on a trip in the summer term.

The GCSE course proper starts in the Fourth Year, and thus it is possible for pupils to opt for Classical Civilisation at this point if they wish. The syllabus focuses on Greece in the Fifth Century BC. For the written exams we study Athens, its culture and religion, Sparta and the Spartan system, and Homer's *Odyssey*. In addition there is a controlled assessment module (worth 25% of the whole), in which candidates usually study the ancient Olympics, before producing a piece of written work on a particular aspect of them. This is done at school under supervision and marked internally: it is best understood as being similar to old-fashioned coursework, but done under exam conditions.

All ancient authors are read in translation, and so no knowledge of Latin or Greek is needed or assumed.

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

AQA GCSE Resistant Materials Technology (4560)

http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/dandt/new/resistant_overview.php

The department has 3 well-equipped workshops, a design classroom and two dedicated ICT suites located within the Design and Technology centre. Pupils are encouraged to work with a wide range of materials and the department has a wide range of computer-controlled machines, allowing an industrial approach to design and manufacture.

The department is open most afternoons for boys to pursue their own interests or to enable them to continue with their coursework projects.

Third Year

Approximately a half of the third year pupils are new to the school and may have very different design and technology experiences. All of the projects that they cover are designed to follow a design process, starting with the design brief, research and idea generation, through to the modelling, making, testing and evaluation. The main emphasis is on developing confidence in the workshop and gaining an understanding of materials and manufacture. The projects taught build in difficulty and demand as the year progresses; these include picture frames, mirrors, designer cufflinks and MP3 speakers. The aim is to ensure that when the pupils finish the third year they are able to make informed decisions about their GCSE options.

Fourth and Fifth Year GCSE Options

During the fourth year the boys undertake four projects designed to give them experiences in a wide range of material areas, while developing their graphical communication and computer aided design skills. This provides them with valuable knowledge for the examination and also helps them decide what materials they may wish to incorporate into their coursework. Projects include traditional skills based projects in Woods and Metals and more contemporary projects including furniture design and USB packaging. The emphasis is on developing their practical skills but also covers the major design movements of the 20th century and the study of several influential designers.

The coursework project is an important element of the GCSE and it contributes 60% of the GCSE mark. The project will be chosen by the student from some exam board contexts and will include, identifying a need and researching the problem through to generating initial ideas and developing a chosen solution, planning for construction and finally product manufacture. The design folio will involve a large amount of ICT and CAD work.

The course aims to encourage students to develop and sustain their own innovation, creativity and design and technology capability. The GCSE course will suit those who are problem solvers, enjoy challenges and those who have the motivation to work consistently throughout the design and manufacture of their coursework piece. Students will need excellent time management skills, and the need to appreciate the design folio is as equally important as the practical work. It aims to increase the knowledge, understanding and skills of design production processes within all of the three main groups of materials: woods, metals and plastics as well as foster awareness amongst boys of the need to consider sustainability and the environmental impact of their designing.

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DRAMA

AQA GCSE Drama (Unit 1 Written Paper - 42401; Unit 2 Practical Work - 42402)

http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/art_dan_dra_mus/new/drama_materials.php?id=04&prev=02

Drama is a popular option for many boys with an interest in the arts. It is taught by members of the drama department. Pupils studying drama see a number of plays and take part in productions as part of the assessment. They are also encouraged to participate in extra-curricular productions (many involving girls from St Helen's). The subject often attracts those with an interest in film, such as members of the Abingdon Film Unit. At GCSE level, drama involves some rehearsals in out-of-school time, so a firm commitment is essential. Above all, drama has a three-dimensional character: you need to be able to bring ideas to life as a performer; you need a good imagination; you also need to be able to analyse texts and write essays. Perhaps most importantly, you need to be able to work well with others.

In the third year, boys choosing to study drama are taught in three or more sets for four periods per fortnight. The course shadows many aspects of AQA's Performing Arts GCSE course (http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/art_dan_dra_mus/new/performing_art_materials.php?id=04&prev=04), in which the aim is to combine workshops on specific performing skills (for example, effective use of voice; expressive movement; choreography; acting; use of lighting and sound equipment; devising a piece of theatre etc) with specific performance briefs, in which students work together to create short presentations for a range of audiences and contexts (for example, a campaigning piece about climate change for an Open Day audience of parents in the drama studio). At all stages, students learn to evaluate their own and others' work, and to assess their skill levels more objectively. The course also involves on average one visit each term to a live theatre production, usually during the evening.

The third year course acts as an introduction to AQA's GCSE Drama course, (AQA 4242), which occupies fourth and fifth years. At this level, there are usually two sets in each year which are taught for five periods per fortnight. The GCSE course is assessed in two main components: practical work (which accounts for 60% of the marks, and is the "controlled assessment" element, formerly called "coursework") and a 90-minute written paper (which constitutes the remaining 40% and is externally marked). Practical work can be undertaken in a wide range of options, but most students choose to perform extracts from published plays, and to devise their own performances.

The first term of the fourth year course involves induction activities and skills development sessions, alongside explorations of brief extracts from plays, chosen to give some sense of theatre styles and theatre history. In the second and third terms, students start to get to grips with longer extracts from plays, and perform a 20-30 minute piece for their first practical assessment before the end of the year. They also visit live theatre productions and develop the skills to write with insight about what they have seen. The fifth year involves the completion of the practical work as students create devised pieces that are performed before a visiting moderator in March. The last component of the course is the written paper in June, in which students answer one compulsory question about practical work they have undertaken, and answer one further question that offers a choice between writing about another piece of their practical work, or a piece of live theatre they have seen.

The GCSE course leads on to GCE AS and A Level Drama and Theatre Studies (Edexcel **8DR01 AS** and **9DR02 A2**) in the sixth form, where it is taught jointly with St Helen's, and offers pupils a taste of co-education. It combines well with almost any other A Level subject, especially other Arts subjects such as English, Art, Music, History or Languages.

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ELECTRONICS

AQA GCSE Electronics (4432)

<http://store.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/pdf/AQA-4430-W-SP.PDF>

Electronics is part of everyday life. It has applications in computers, telecommunications, radio and television, industrial process control etc. Research and development in the electronics industry plays a key role in the country's economic success. Electronics GCSE level reflects up-to-date practice into electronics, and highlights real world applications.

Pupils will be given a broad understanding of the fundamental aspects of electronics. In the fourth year they are taught basic electricity, timing circuits, digital logic, and use of semi conductors. The fifth year syllabus covers sequential logic, microprocessors, amplification systems, and communication systems.

Electronics is a practical subject and practical work is given a strong emphasis throughout the course.

There is a practical project that is worth 25% of the overall GCSE grade. In this project, the pupil should identify a specific, applied electronics problem to be solved. He should consider alternative solutions and give reasons for selecting the chosen solution, conduct background research, devise appropriate circuit diagrams, construct and test the system, suggest suitable modifications, and produce a report which details all stages of the development.

Although the basic electricity taught in Physics underpins Electronics, most of the subject content in Electronics is unique and not part of the Physics syllabus. Electronics is, in essence, an engineering subject and not a science. Its emphasis is, therefore, much more on practical application.

Electronics is suitable for candidates from a wide ability range: for some, the summit of achievement may be to construct and describe simple circuits, while others may gain sufficient depth of understanding to design systems to solve original problems.

Electronics combines a high level of academic rigour with a high level of invention and design. It gives pupils the vital knowledge and expertise to enable them to contribute in an increasingly technological society. The intention is to allow 'hands-on' experience in order to promote a deeper understanding, as well as a broader appreciation of potential applications. Electronics compliments and enriches a broad curriculum. It provides a contrast to arts and humanities subjects. It offers skills such as problem solving, analytical thinking, communication of complex ideas, acquisition of knowledge, numeracy, and fine manual dexterity. Electronics extends and encourages a pupil's interest in science and technology.

The school does not offer Electronics at AS or A-level.

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ENGLISH

Cambridge IGCSE English (0500)

http://www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/academic/middlesec/IGCSE/subject?assdef_id=852

Cambridge IGCSE English Literature (0486)

http://www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/academic/middlesec/IGCSE/subject?assdef_id=853

Throughout Middle School we continue to place emphasis on fun, active lessons that are focused on the development of pupils' creativity, literacy, and analytical skills. The overarching aims are that pupils will read and study a broad range of texts, will learn to vary their own written and spoken English for a range of purposes and audiences, and will construct more convincing, developed arguments through being taught how to plan, structure and craft relevant, written responses to literary texts.

English is compulsory up to the end of the fifth year, with all pupils studying towards two IGCSEs. We follow the IGCSE specifications as we believe that they offer our pupils the strongest and most suitable experience of English in Middle School years. During these two years, pupils are taught by one English teacher in classes that are streamed according to pupils' abilities as English students.

The English Department also places a large emphasis on co-curricular classes and activities. Staff lead classes in a twice weekly Literary Society that offers opportunities for boys to extend their reading, and in a Creative Writing group that meets weekly. Pupils produce their own creative writing magazine and newspaper, and each includes contributions from all year groups. Trips to theatres and lectures are regularly arranged in order to enrich study for Fourth and Fifth Form classes, and, as examinations approach, staff offer regular drop-in clinics for pupils to attend.

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GEOGRAPHY

Edexcel IGCSE Geography

<http://www.edexcel.com/QUALS/IGCSE/IGCSE09/GEOGRAPHY/Pages/default.aspx>

The IGCSE course is taught over two years: geography is compulsory within our third year curriculum and then becomes an option subject in the fourth and fifth years. We intend to cover a range of themes in the third year that, we hope, offers a broad experience in geography and allows pupils to make a measured judgement about the subject. This modern course includes many contemporary issues that are becoming increasingly relevant and important: geography is uniquely placed to give pupils an insight into these issues that will affect them in the future. Fieldwork is incorporated into our teaching throughout the middle school.

The course is divided into three sections:

The Natural Environment and People: the following themes will be developed:

River Environments – including water resources, and the growing cause for concern that this crucial resource poses in some parts of the world.

Hazardous Environments – this includes the study of both tectonic and meteorological hazards and the impacts they have on societies and development.

Coastal Environments – includes the study of coastal landscapes and the complex issues involved in managing this most complex of environments e.g. sea level rise, coastal erosion, the pressure of development in coastal areas.

People and Their Environments: includes

Economic Activity and Energy – includes an assessment of the relative importance of different economic sectors, changing industrial locations and the rising demand for energy and the energy gap.

Urban Environments – considers the nature of urbanisation and the associated problems of rapid urbanisation and change within urban areas. Also issues related to segregation of different socio-economic and ethnic groups will be explored. During this option a field day visit to Bristol is arranged during the summer term of the fourth year.

Global Issues: this set of themes brings this specification up to date and deal with many contemporary issues that geography should be tackling in the middle school.

Fragile environments – a single theme from this section is taught in each of the middle school years. They include: rainforest destruction and the related issues, drought and desertification and Global Warming and climatic change.

Globalisation and migration: the rise of the global economy and the consequent shift in global manufacturing. The implications for global migration patterns.

Development and Human Welfare: this unit explores the differences in development and human welfare that exist around the world at a variety of scales. The significance of population policies and changing demographic patterns and structures will also be explored.

Assessment:

This is by one single-tier final examination: there is no controlled assessment or assessed project work.

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HISTORY

Edexcel IGCSE History (4H10)

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/IGCSE/IGCSE09/history/Pages/default.aspx>

The History department at Abingdon prides itself in being academically rigorous and educationally forward thinking. We believe that it is vital that lessons are dynamic, engaging and interactive so that pupils enjoy their learning. It is our aim at all times to use creative and imaginative teaching techniques which are geared to challenge and facilitate learning for the full range of learning styles.

The central objectives of the department are twofold: to foster enthusiasm for, and a life-long interest in, the past, its events and characters, and to help boys to develop an understanding of the significance of these events and characters and the connections between them. Boys not only investigate 'who?' and 'what?' but are also encouraged to analyse 'why?'

The department is housed in modern, purpose-built accommodation in Mercers' Court and the boys are encouraged to make increasing use of the opportunities afforded by the ICT Centre nearby.

History is a compulsory subject in the third year. The theme for the year is 'War and Revolution'. Boys are encouraged to understand causation and also to examine how both war and revolution act as catalysts for change. The year focuses on the French Revolution and the origins and course of the First World War, which should provide an interesting and stimulating range of material for all.

The department has amassed a wide variety of resources - topic books, 'in-house' booklets, videos, DVDs and computer-generated materials - to support the chosen subject matter. To add an extra dimension to the course all third year boys are offered the opportunity to visit the First World War battlefields of the Ypres Salient and the Somme at the start of the Easter holiday.

GCSE history, an optional subject at Abingdon, is a two-year course in the fourth and fifth years. The syllabus (Edexcel IGCSE) is examined in one two and a half paper:

The paper is a single paper with three sections:

- Themes section-Germany 1918-1945 and Superpower relations 1945-62
- A depth study on Russia in Revolution, 1914-24
- A study in change section, Conflict, crisis and change: The Middle East 1919-1973

An optional trip to Germany in the summer half term of the fourth year will help to bring to life elements of Hitler's rise to power as well as introducing boys to some of the key elements of the Cold War (focused on events around Berlin) that they will also study in the fourth form.

We are fortunate in having excellent resources for the GCSE course. The main text, B. Walsh, *Modern World History* is supported by a number of topic books and ICT resources and a rich variety of DVD and video materials. Once again, the boys benefit from the use of the ICT Centre close by and the use of data projector and interactive whiteboard materials in the History classrooms. The students subscribe to *Hindsight* magazine throughout the two years, which is also a helpful resource.

It is our intention that the range of history topics offered in the Middle School at Abingdon should provide many insights into the essential underpinnings of the world in which we all live. Furthermore, the skills of argument and critical evaluation developed during these key years contribute significantly to individual academic development, irrespective of the path a boy chooses to take in the sixth form.

DR McGill (david.mcgill@abingdon.org.uk)

ICT

Through their work in the Information & Communication Technology (ICT) department, pupils are encouraged to develop informed, intelligent and confident attitudes to ICT and to develop abilities which, as well as being of value in school, prepare them for their further education and careers. Cross curricular links with ICT are strongly encouraged and many lessons in other subjects either take place in an ICT centre or use the departments' own computing facilities.

Abingdon has a school-wide network of Macintosh computers. The ICT department has ICT centres in two different buildings and there are clusters of computers elsewhere in the School. This arrangement enables departments throughout the school to share the centralised resources of the main ICT centre. These resources include the storage of pupils' work, access to material prepared by staff, a wide range of software, access to the Internet and Intranet, etc. The teaching work of the ICT department happens in the ICT centres.

Many middle school pupils from all three years use the computers in their Other Half activities time after lessons, when they work on projects either for school subjects or of their own device. The ICT Centre in Mercers' Court is open after school from 4.00 to 5.00 pm., on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. A programming club runs regularly too.

At Abingdon, Information and Communication Technology is a service to the School, offering new media and techniques for the handling of information in its many forms. As such it challenges the ingenuity and creativity of pupils.

D Haworth (david.haworth@abingdon.org.uk)

MATHEMATICS

Edexcel IGCSE Mathematics A

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/IGCSE/IGCSE09/maths/mathsA/Pages/default.aspx>

OCR Additional Mathematics (6993)

http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/type/fsmq/maths/add_maths/index.html

Mathematics is compulsory for all students in the Middle School, and all will have taken at least the equivalent of GCSE in the subject by the end of the fifth year. As well as enabling each student to achieve his potential in examinations, the course is designed to give everyone the opportunity to develop their ability to think through problems, and develop the mathematical skills and understanding which will support work in other scientific subjects, in the social sciences, and for later employment and adult life. The department aims that students should become aware that mathematics is an interesting and enjoyable field in its own right, and also that it continues to be central to many diverse and important branches of endeavour in the modern world. The mathematics course for the Middle School covers the requirements of the National Curriculum, adapted as necessary to the requirements of Abingdon.

An important part of the focus at Abingdon is that Mathematics can be the basis of rigorous and creative thinking skills. The third year programme of study concentrates on ensuring that all boys reach at least a common minimum standard of proficiency, (regardless of their previous mathematical experience), but has also been designed to give students the opportunity to engage with more open-ended tasks which require thought and tenacity. The 4th and 5th years are spent focussing on the requirements of the syllabus for IGCSE and/or Additional Maths.

There are usually seven sets for Maths in the Middle years. Students are assigned to sets based on their previous attainment, but also to where they will flourish and be happy. Movement between sets is possible when necessary, usually taking place at the end of a year. The majority of our students achieve very high grades, no matter which set they are in. The top sets complete the material for IGCSE at a fast pace. They will have completed most of the syllabus for IGCSE by the end of their 4th Year and will then begin on the material for Additional Maths, in the 5th Year.

All sets take IGCSE at the end of the 5th Year. Students are entered for the International GCSE examination provided by Edexcel (4MA0). Assessment consists of two written papers, of two hours each, which are taken at the end of the course. The requirements for this examination are comparable to GCSEs offered by other boards. All boys will be entered for the Higher Level of this examination, which means that the highest grades are accessible, in principle, to all. Top sets will be entered for Additional Maths provided by OCR (6993). This consists of a single 2 hour paper.

All good mathematicians enjoy solving problems and puzzles, and a regular diet of these is provided to boys to stimulate interest and enthusiasm for the subject. Some boys are entered each year for the UK Intermediate Mathematics Challenge contest, with a number regularly being invited to take part in the second round of this competition. There is a weekly Maths Club, which, although aimed at Lower School has been attracting students from the Middle years who have been acting as helpful mentors to their colleagues. They spend a good proportion of their time on the National Cipher Challenge in the autumn and then work on other mathematical projects and puzzles through the rest of the year.

Vanessa Penrose (vanessa.penrose@abingdon.org.uk)

MODERN LANGUAGES

French, German, Spanish and Mandarin Chinese are all offered to boys entering the third year. We aim to foster a love for the countries in which these languages are spoken and to generate an enthusiasm for learning languages. We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate the culture of the countries of their target languages, running exchanges in France, Germany and Spain, organising visits of touring theatre companies and many other trips. The study of modern languages at Abingdon gives them enjoyment and satisfaction, as well as intellectual stimulation.

All boys in the third year must study French or German and may study any one or two of the starter languages on offer alongside. All boys must study either French, German or Spanish up to IGCSE, and many continue with two languages and in some cases even three. Many boys combine a modern foreign language with other A-level subjects in the sixth form.

We create a secure, supportive and respectful learning environment within the classroom so that each student feels confident in his own ability to communicate effectively. We endeavour to enable all students to achieve their potential, thus embracing not only the idea of communicative competence, but also that of academic excellence. Extra lessons are provided to both weaker and gifted pupils, tailoring what we offer to ensure every boy's individual needs are met.

We are committed to the predominant use of the target language in all classes, whilst acknowledging that the use of the English can sometimes be more appropriate, particularly for the delivery of grammar, in order to ensure full comprehension. We deliver lessons using a variety of techniques and a broad range of resources. Regular opportunities for success in learning provide students with a positive attitude towards their own language acquisition. This is reinforced by regular contact with our foreign language assistants, particularly for boys in the fifth year who benefit from an additional weekly oral lesson.

Our modern languages classrooms are all equipped with state of the art equipment. We also have a mini-suite of Apple Macs that are regularly used during lessons and during the many clubs and support groups we run. A wide arrange of enriching Other Half opportunities are on offer, including regular language clubs, grammar clinics and a joint languages club with St. Helen's.

In French, German and Spanish, all boys are ready to begin the IGCSE course by the start of the fourth year. For IGCSE the skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing are developed and assessed with equal importance. The topic areas include media, school, future careers, health and fitness, home life, sport, entertainment, local area and the environment, travel and the wider world. For details of GCSE Chinese, please see the Mandarin entry which follows.

Modern Languages Coordinator

AJ Loughe (andrew.loughe@abingdon.org.uk)

GERMAN

Cambridge IGCSE German (0525)

http://www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/academic/middlesec/IGCSE/subject?assdef_id=860

We follow the *Echo* German course throughout the Middle School, including the interactive ActiveTeach resources and web-based pupil activity packages. In the fourth year the majority of Germanists participate in our longstanding exchange with the *Ratsgymnasium* in Bielefeld, which has been running for forty-five years, jointly with St. Helen's.

Head of German

AJ Loughe (andrew.loughe@abingdon.org.uk)

FRENCH

Cambridge IGCSE French (0520)

http://www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/academic/middlesec/IGCSE/subject?assdef_id=857

Abingdon currently follows the *Encore Tricolore* and *Tricolore Totale* courses in the middle school. All boys begin their third year at Abingdon in entirely mixed sets. Two top sets are formed in October based on the results of a progress test and on their linguistic potential. We run a trip to Paris for third years at the end of the Michaelmas term and boys in the fourth and fifth years are invited to participate in our exchange with *Lycée la Nativité* in Aix-en-Provence, which has been running successfully for seven years.

Head of French

JA Mansfield (jane.mansfield@abingdon.org.uk)

SPANISH

Cambridge IGCSE Spanish (0530)

http://www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/academic/middlesec/IGCSE/subject?assdef_id=887

The Spanish department follows the Heinemann *Mira Express* course, which matches the CIE IGCSE syllabus. Boys in the fifth year have the opportunity to take part in our Spanish exchange with *Colegio Peleteiro* in Santiago de Compostela. This is also run jointly with St. Helen's.

Head of Spanish

V Pradas (victoria.pradas@abingdon.org.uk)

MANDARIN CHINESE

Edexcel GCSE Mandarin Chinese (2CN01)

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse09/mfl/chinese/Pages/default.aspx>

Mandarin was introduced at Abingdon in 2006 and we follow the Edexcel GCSE course, which takes three years. Speaking and writing are examined by controlled assessment. This offers the freedom to choose when pupils should undertake these assessments anytime throughout the course and both assessments can be completed based on the following four topics: media and culture, sport and leisure, travel and tourism, business, work and employment. Listening and reading skills are both assessed through exam papers in summer. All Abingdon students always take the Higher Tier paper in both skills. Boys studying Chinese are invited on trips to China Town in London and have the opportunity to spend two weeks in China.

Head of Chinese

L Man (lina.man@abingdon.org.uk)

MUSIC

Examination Board – Edexcel GCSE Music 2MU01

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse09/music/Pages/default.aspx>

The aims of the music department in the Middle School fall broadly into line with those published in the Edexcel specification for music which is adopted in the fourth and fifth years: We aim to inspire the pupils through a broad course of music study; to develop broader life skills, such as aesthetic understanding, emotional awareness, self-discipline, self-confidence and self-motivation. We want the pupils to engage actively in the study of music, and appreciate a range of different kinds of music. These aims are developed through a range of engagement with music as performers, composers and listeners.

In the Third Year music option sets (four periods per fortnight) pupils are given a grounding in the three areas of experience required at GCSE (performing, composing and listening). Performing is delivered through instrumental lessons and ensembles, with a class concert involving all pupils towards the end of each term. The Introduction to Composition course includes basic melody writing, simple harmonization, and bass line construction. Knowledge of form is applied through the writing of a simple piece in Rondo Form. Work in

Listening and Analysis is delivered through the study of selected works under the following six headings: Form and Structure, Harmony and Tonality, Texture, Melody, Rhythm and Metre, Instrumentation. The selected works show a progression of musical form through the Baroque and Classical periods of History: Binary Form (*Bach - Sarabande from Partita 4*), Ternary (*Handel - Dove Sei*), Rondo (*Rameau - L'Ingenue*), Theme and Variations (*Haydn – Theme from Judas Maccabeus*) and Sonata (Mozart – *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*). The boys are also introduced to the use of music technology (Sibelius software) in the department's technology room. The boys take a listening/theory of composition examination at the end of the year. The course highlights the importance of a sound theoretical training as a preparation for the GCSE music course in the fourth year. Pupils cover the topics associated with the grade 3 syllabus of ABRSM and take the examination at the appropriate level (minimum grade 3) in the Lent Term. Those pupils who have already achieved their grade 5 level can use this lesson time to study advanced technique as performers.

In the Fourth Year the two music option sets start the Edexcel Music GCSE course and take the examination after two years. The listening work (two periods) involves the analysis and discussion of a wide variety of music through four areas of study and twelve set works of different style and origin. Performing continues to be coordinated through instrumental lessons and boys are allocated various chamber groups during the course of the year as well as in school orchestras, bands and choirs. The boys are expected to sing at least once a week and are encouraged to perform regularly at informal concerts. In composing (two periods) the boys undertake a number of compositional exercises using Sibelius software.

In the Fifth Year the boys complete the four areas of study and have a mock examination paper set at the start of the fifth term of the GCSE course. By the end of the Lent Term they expect to have recorded and assessed the prepared performances (solo and ensemble) and to have submitted the two compositions required.

The music department provides regular opportunities for the boys to attend trips to concerts and operas, both in Oxford and further afield in Birmingham and London. An annual trip to London for third year option sets explores the music of Indonesian Gamelan in the LSO St Luke's Project.

As singing and confident pitching is regarded as an essential element of musicianship, the boys are required to take part in the Choral Society (Michaelmas Term). They are also encouraged to take part in the wide range of weekly meeting choirs and ensembles. This results in a busy and rich programme of concert giving throughout the year, which is enjoyed by pupils and parents alike.

MA Stinton (michael.stinton@abingdon.org.uk)

Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education

The aims of the Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship education at Abingdon are:

1. Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of ability.
2. Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle.
3. Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people.
4. Developing knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens.

Delivery of PSHE & Citizenship takes place through:

- The PSHE programme delivered by specialist teachers and tutors.
- Assemblies, Chapel and lectures.
- Activities in the "Other Half" including clubs, societies and Community Service.
- Trips and excursions.
- The academic curriculum, most notably Biology and Religious Studies.

In the Third Year boys investigate self-esteem & bullying, the use and abuse of alcohol, healthy lifestyles as well as receiving Sex & Relationships education and an introduction to careers that includes a visit to the library. In addition we have begun to get each tutor group to pilot some self-awareness software called 'Talking with Crocodiles', which gets them to think more about their own personality types and the ways in which they are similar or different to those around them.

In the Fourth Year Careers education begins more formally including diagnostic testing designed to encourage the boys to match skills and characteristics to future careers. Topics covered include Parliament and the electoral system as well as having an awareness of Human Rights and its evolution. In addition the issues surrounding illegal drugs and tobacco are taught through the development of skills to resist peer pressure and manage risk-taking situations.

Much of the Fifth Year course looks ahead to life beyond school. The Careers programme involves preparation for Work Experience and studying personal finance along with promoting a greater understanding of stereotypes and discrimination.

Outside the tutorial setting several of the issues relevant to PSHE are covered within the academic curriculum in both biology and religious studies, which explore the scientific and ethical sides of topics such as sexual reproduction, euthanasia and abortion.

Finally, as well as covering these topics formally though out the year, boys are given guidance with revision and study techniques relevant to their year group.

R Southwell-Sander (robin.southwellsander@abingdon.org.uk)

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

AQA GCSE Religious Studies A

http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/his_rel/new/rel_studies_a_overview.php

Religious Studies is a challenging academic subject that requires pupils to learn and understand difficult material and then to argue their viewpoint clearly. It is valuable in developing skills in writing and thinking and expressing an idea clearly and persuasively. It helps pupils to interpret information and to assess its importance.

Pupils need to be ready to consider new ideas and to argue a case. They do not need to have any particular religious conviction or any religious conviction at all. Religious Studies includes the study of fundamental questions about humanity and allows students to make informed personal responses to difficult contemporary issues.

The Third Year

This begins with a study of conflict in war and in society, which contributes greatly to human suffering. We look at contemporary issues such as terrorism and nuclear proliferation, as well as questions of justice and punishment.

The second course focuses on philosophy, which is central to Religious Studies dealing as it does with the fundamental questions of existence. We study questions of evil and suffering and the extent to which humanity is to blame. Or can we blame God?

In the third course we consider Islam, a religion that is significant for many of the most important political issues of our day. Islam's particular vision of God and mankind is a challenge to comprehend and so we start with the fundamentals of Muslim faith and practice including a detailed study of the Five Pillars of Islam.

We finish the year with a study of Religion and Media, considering the role of religion in film, art, television and focusing on such questions as meaning, fairness, accuracy, truth and presentation. This culminates in a media-based project on one of the topics covered in the year.

GCSE

At GCSE we offer a course in Philosophy (Unit 7) and Ethics (Unit 2) from AQA Religious Studies A (4050). Unit 7 includes arguments about the existence of God as well as questions about the compatibility of science and religion and concerns about life after death. Unit 2 includes questions about the value of life, the role of modern technology and the issue of world poverty. It would appeal to anyone who wishes to think more deeply about life and existence. It encourages clear communication, lively debate and critical thinking and is an excellent foundation for the skills needed for further academic study.

GR Moody (george.moody@abingdon.org.uk)

SCIENCE

An overview of Science in the Middle School

At the start of the Middle school in the third year, all boys are put into general sets to study Physics, Chemistry and Biology, each taught by a subject specialist.

At Abingdon all science classes in the fourth and fifth year are set by science ability and are taught by subject specialists. We offer two routes through fourth and fifth year science; boys study for the Certificate in Science (IGCSE) in either separate sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) or Science and Additional Science (termed “dual award” science at Abingdon).

Boys who take dual award science have fewer periods of science than those taking separate sciences but study four optional subjects to GCSE rather than three. This course is suitable for boys who wish to take an extra optional subject; for example, the combination of History, Geography, Latin and German. Even if the pupil ultimately intends to take up one or more sciences for A level, his parents might consider that the breadth of education provided by four arts subjects up to the age of sixteen is more important than a wholehearted immersion in science at this stage. Each case must be considered on its merits. If a boy intends to do more than one A level science then he would usually study separate sciences for GCSE but boys can successfully take up A level science after Dual award provided their grades are very good.

A boy should consult his science teachers or the Director of Studies for advice on the suitability of Dual award Science or separate sciences for him.

SCIENCE AND ADDITIONAL SCIENCE (DUAL AWARD SCIENCE)

AQA Certificate in Science (IGCSE Science)

<http://store.aqa.org.uk/qual/IGCSE/pdf/AQA-SCIENCE-IGCSE-DOUBLE-AWARD.PDF>and

Dual award science is taught in nine periods a fortnight in the fourth year and ten periods a fortnight in the fifth year and leads to two GCSE's (Science and Additional Science). The Physics, Chemistry and Biology components are taught by subject specialists and the coursework is consists of an experiment carried out by the pupil followed by an examination testing his understanding of his own and similar experiments.

Dual award is about the same level of difficulty as separate sciences, but less science is covered.

Science Coordinator

DJ Bickerton (david.bickerton@abingdon.org.uk)

BIOLOGY

AQA IGCSE Certificate in Biology

This is a new course, and although the qualification has now been accredited, only a draft specification is available on the AQA website.

<http://www.sciencelab.org.uk/other/aqa-certificate-biology.php>

The AQA Certificate in Biology (IGCSE) helps students understand the scientific process and implement practical and investigative work. Students will cover topics such as tissues, organs and organ systems, carbohydrates, lipids, proteins and enzymes, human biology and homeostasis.

The biology department has developed its own course in the Third Year in which we try to develop some of the important underlying skills necessary to do well at GCSE. We use a lot of experiments and other exercises to enable boys to learn to apply their facts to various problems, and to be able to evaluate data from a range of sources. There is some factual content linked to the experiment and this is appropriate to both biology and Science/Additional Science pupils.

The fourth and fifth year biology course is linear and pupils will take two 90 minute examinations papers at the end of the course. The course helps students understand the scientific process and implement practical and investigative work. Through a lot of practical investigations, pupils will learn skills such as observation, investigation design, measurement and data presentation and handling.

In the fourth year, pupils will study topics such as cell biology, biochemistry, human biology, infectious disease and plants as organisms. In the fifth year they study variation/inheritance, adaptation/interdependence, evolution, food chains, decay and the carbon cycle.

This specification has no Controlled Assessment and less focus on some aspects of How Science Works thereby leaving time for a more detailed study of scientific knowledge and the development of scientific enquiry and practical work skills essential for further study in this subject. Candidates' understanding of scientific investigations and practical work is assessed through the written papers.

SE Bliss (simon.bliss@abingdon.org.uk)

CHEMISTRY

Edexcel IGCSE Chemistry (4CHO)

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/IGCSE/IGCSE09/chemistry>

Chemistry – as the fundamental basis behind most scientific and technological progress – has shaped the course of the last hundred years to a vast extent. This would never have been possible unless chemists had been interested in two major areas: practical problems and problem solving. Ability in these areas can only come about through a thorough knowledge of the underlying principles behind the chemical reactions being manipulated. In the Chemistry Department, we aim to provide a significant degree of factual knowledge, allow pupils to develop greater practical skills and above all to foster the spirit of scientific enquiry. These skills will be invaluable for any further study of science at A Level or beyond, although the primary aim is to ensure that boys perform to the highest possible level of which they are capable.

Six full time members of staff (all Chemistry specialists) teach the subject in five purpose-built and well-stocked laboratories: there are also three preparation areas and associated store-rooms. The teaching staff are well supported by a team of excellent laboratory technicians. Computer facilities are available in each laboratory to make use of our data projectors, data loggers and internet access.

Boys who opt to study Chemistry as a separate subject at GCSE will be taking the Edexcel IGCSE qualification. This is similar in style to the old GCSE courses and around half the boys continue from this course to study chemistry in the Sixth Form. The topics that will be studied (bonding, periodic table, quantitative chemistry, organic chemistry etc) provide an excellent grounding in the subject and provide a platform from which to approach further studies at AS and A2 level.

The final examination will consist of two papers. Paper 1 (worth 66.7%) lasts for two hours and covers the core elements of the course. Paper 2 (worth 33.3%) lasts for one hour and covers all the syllabus content and as a result includes questions on the most demanding topic areas. Practical work is a key component of the chemistry teaching and both papers have questions that focus on examining the skills the boys have acquired as a result of the experiments they have completed as part of the course. Roughly 20% of the marks will be related to this area. As a result there is no coursework element to the examination.

Boys who study Chemistry as a separate subject at GCSE are in a stronger position from which to approach the AS course. However, the most able students are certainly capable of handling the transition from Dual Award to Sixth Form studies by undertaking some extra work.

Ian Middleton (ian.middleton@abingdon.org.uk)

PHYSICS

AQA IGCSE Certificate

<http://store.aqa.org.uk/qual/IGCSE/pdf/AQA-SCIENCE-IGCSE-PHYS-W-SP.PDF>

The aim of the middle school physics course is to provide a sound understanding of natural phenomena suitable for the future citizen, irrespective of whether he aims for a science-based career or not.

All boys take physics in the middle school either as a separate science or as an element in 'dual award' science. The syllabus is taught by seven full-time physics teachers in six laboratories, equipped with smart boards. Eighteen e-Mac computers and twelve portable pc laptops with associated data-logging equipment are used during the course.

We use the textbook "*Physics for You*" by Keith Johnson which has good physics written in a lively style. Alternative textbooks can be made available if required. The course content is organized into five themes, each of which is returned to every year allowing pupils to revise and consolidate on previous work.

Theme 1: Electricity

year 3	Static electricity
year 4	Power in electrical circuits and costs of electricity
year 5	Electromagnetism, and domestic electricity

Theme 2: Mechanics

year 3	Energy, sources and generation & efficiency
year 4	Forces, moments, Kinetic energy & momentum
year 5	Momentum & circular motion

Theme 3: Astronomy

year 3	The Big Bang
year 4	no Astronomy
year 5	Gravity & satellites, Life cycles of stars

Theme 4: Waves

year 3	Electromagnetic spectrum
year 4	Mirrors & lenses
year 5	Sound, ultrasound & communications

Theme 5: The Particle Model

year 3	Solid, liquid and gas models
year 4	Radioactivity
year 5	Nuclear fission & fusion

There are 2 ninety minute exams and no coursework.

John Brooks (john.brooks@abingdon.org.uk)

Sport & Physical Education

Physical Education

There are five full-time physical education specialists in the Department. Compulsory PE lessons are integrated within the academic timetable in the middle school, giving individual pupils, especially the less able, access to specialist teaching. Within PE lessons a wide and balanced range of activities is offered, including, amongst others, net/wall sports, gymnastic and athletic activities, swimming, health related fitness, strength & conditioning, and boxercise.

The aims are five-fold:

Fitness: To instil the importance of a healthy body and mind, by promoting physical activity as a means to a healthy lifestyle.

Social and Moral: Through small-sided games and group activities, we encourage boys to mix and co-operate. Through competition, we aim to instil the correct attitudes towards winning and losing and develop the pupils' self-discipline and positive sporting behaviour. Boys should develop a sense of purpose, confidence, politeness, perseverance, initiative and independence.

Cognitive: To instil knowledge and understanding of the rules, skills, tactics and aims of the various activities, and encouraging pupils to apply these concepts appropriately in the different activities and critically evaluate their performance.

Leisure: By providing a wide variety of sports, we hope to encourage pupils to continue their participation in physical activity way beyond their school years.

Aesthetic: To encourage pupils to appreciate and evaluate form and movement as well as giving them the opportunity to express their creative ability.

Sport

The emphasis is on providing the opportunity for all pupils to take part in two sessions of changed activity per week, throughout the year. It also gives boys the opportunity to represent the school in competitions with other schools and to progress to represent higher teams at county, divisional and national level. The Sports programme is run predominantly outside the curriculum. The pupils have the opportunity to choose which sporting activity they would like to do each term.

Sports Activities provided (chosen on an option basis with guidance from the tutor)

Michaelmas Term	Lent Term	Summer Term
Rugby	Hockey	Cricket
Badminton	Rowing	Rowing
Cross-country	Badminton	Tennis
Fencing	Cross-country	Athletics
Squash	Fencing	Swimming
Squash	Kayaking	Swimming
Sailing	Athletics	
	Football	

PE specialists and other members of staff, who have an interest, and often expertise, in particular sports, staff the Sports programme. The use of non-specialist teaching staff for sport gives both teachers and pupils the opportunity to communicate and develop a relationship outside the classroom. Pupils are streamed into teams depending on their ability and we fulfil fixtures against other schools regularly. Those who are not in a team are organised into recreational groups where they take suitable exercise under supervision.

AS Hall (andrew.hall@abingdon.org.uk)