THE ST LEONARDS ACADEMY

YEAR 9

GUIDED CHOICES

2026

PRIDE THROUGH SUCCESS

Dear Student,

You're about to make some important choices about what subjects you'll study for your final exams in 2028. This guide will help you make those decisions and give you useful advice.

If you need help, speak to:

- Your parents or carers
- Your tutor
- Subject teachers
- Senior staff

When considering courses, there are a number of questions you should be asking yourself:

Think about your strengths and interests. If you don't enjoy performing, Drama may not be the best choice. If you love sports, consider Sport Studies.

It’s okay if you don’t know your future job yet. But picking subjects related to a career are interested in will make things easier later. For example, if you might want to be a doctor, taking Triple Science will help.

- ✔ Read this booklet carefully.
- ✔ Talk to your parents, carers, tutor, and teachers.
- ✔ Attend the options evening and complete a paper copy of the options form

Not all subject combinations are possible because of timetabling. You must select reserve choices in case your first choices are unavailable. Some courses may not run if not enough students choose them.

If we need to change your options, we’ll talk to you first. So please put as much thought into your reserve choices as your main ones!

Please rest assured your future is of the utmost importance to us and we will do our best to accommodate your choices, ensuring they are the best ones to support your future, whatever that may be.

Yours faithfully,

Mr C Dean
Assistant Principal

Useful links

Examination boards:	Edexcel: AQA: www.aqa.org.uk OCR: www.ocr.org.uk WJEC: www.wjec.co.uk
Colleges:	Bexhill College: www.bexhillcollege.ac.uk East Sussex College Hastings: www.sussexcoast.ac.uk Plumpton College: www.plumpton.ac.uk
University guidance:	UCAS: www.ucas.com Unistats: www.unistats.direct.gov.uk
Careers advice & support:	Courses/careers: www.courses-careers.com Careers portal: www.careers-portal.co.uk Futurewise: www.myfuturewise.org.uk Future Morph: www.futuremorph.org NHS: www.stepintothenhs.nhs.uk STEM: www.wherestemcantakeyou.co.uk

THE CORE CURRICULUM

The Core curriculum consists of those subjects that are compulsory for all students.

THE CORE CURRICULUM				
English Language	English Literature	Maths	Science (Double Award)	Core PE (non-examined)

OTHER SUBJECTS

A	B	C
HUMANITIES & LANGUAGES	**CREATIVE SUBJECTS**	**BREADTH SUBJECTS**
GCSE History	GCSE - DT Resistant Material	GCSE Sociology
GCSE Geography	GCSE - DT Textiles	OCR Sports Studies
GCSE French	GCSE Drama	GCSE Triple Science
GCSE Spanish	GCSE Art	GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition
	GCSE Photography	BTEC Health & Social Care
	BTEC Performing Arts	GCSE Religious Studies
		GCSE Computer Science

All pupils will need to choose **one first choice and one reserve** from **Column A (Humanities and Languages)** and **one first choice and one reserve** from **Column B (Creative subjects)**.

Pupils will then choose **one additional subject from any column**, along with **one reserve choice from any column**.

Pupils' choices will be guided by members of the Senior Leadership Team or Year Teams, taking into account their **aspirations, interests and previous attainment**. In some cases, pupils may be directed towards **additional support in subjects such as English or Maths** if they are currently under-achieving; this would take the place of one option choice.

Every pupil will receive guidance to ensure that their options provide a **broad and balanced curriculum** and support their **future pathways**.

The Core Curriculum

GCSE English Language

GCSE English Literature

GCSE Mathematics

GCSE Combined Science (double award)

Physical Education (non examined)

GCSE English Language

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- This course is compulsory for all students.
- You will learn to write in different styles, including letters, speeches, and articles.
- The course develops both creativity and analytical skills.

What will I learn?

You will develop key skills in reading, writing, and communication, including:

- Reading and understanding a range of texts from different time periods (19th-21st century), including fiction, non-fiction, reviews, and journalism.
- Analysing and comparing texts critically.
- Summarising key ideas and combining information from different sources.
- Writing clearly and effectively in Standard English.
- Using correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Expanding your vocabulary and understanding how language works.
- Listening and speaking confidently in Standard English.

How will I be assessed?

You will read and respond to unseen texts, showing how well you can understand and analyse writing, as well as applying your knowledge to your own written work.

Where could this course take you?

English Language is a vital skill for all careers. It helps you develop strong reading and writing abilities, which are essential for further study and work.

It can lead to A-Levels in English Literature, English Language, Media, History, and Law. Employers and universities look for good English skills, as they show you can communicate well.

This subject is especially useful for careers in journalism, teaching, law, writing, politics, marketing, and advertising.

Subject contacts: Miss N Sparrow: n.sparrow@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

Miss A Stokes: a.stokes@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE English Literature

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- This course is compulsory for all students.
- You will study a variety of texts, including a modern play, a 19th-century novel, a collection of classic and modern poetry, and a Shakespeare play.
- It is studied alongside English Language and helps develop creative thinking and analytical skills.

What will I learn?

Reading Skills

- Understanding words, phrases, and sentences in context.
- Exploring plot, characters, and themes.
- Analysing how historical and cultural backgrounds influence texts.
- Evaluating a writer's language, structure, and style.

Writing Skills

- Writing clear, well-structured responses.
- Explaining, summarising, and analysing texts effectively.
- Using correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

How will I be assessed?

You will read and analyse a range of classic texts, making connections between them and developing your ability to think critically.

Where could this course take you?

English Literature is useful for many careers, as it improves your ability to think, write, and communicate clearly. It can lead to A-Levels in English Literature, English Language, Media, History, and Law.

This subject is especially helpful for careers in journalism, teaching, law, writing, politics, marketing, and advertising.

Subject contacts: Miss N Sparrow: n.sparrow@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

Miss A Stokes: a.stokes@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE Mathematics

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- This is a core subject that all students must take.
- Maths is an essential life skill that helps you solve problems, think logically, and make decisions.
- Many careers, apprenticeships, and further education courses require a good Maths grade.

What will I learn?

You will develop skills in:

- Using mathematical techniques to solve problems.
- Thinking logically and drawing conclusions.
- Understanding and interpreting mathematical information.

The course covers six key areas:

Number – working with calculations and numerical skills.
Algebra – solving equations and understanding patterns.
Ratio, Proportion & Rates of Change – understanding comparisons and scaling.
Geometry & Measures – shapes, space, and measurements.
Probability – predicting and analysing chance events.
Statistics – collecting and interpreting data.

Where could this course take you?

Maths is important for all careers and is especially valued in accountancy, business, banking, science, and technology.

A strong Maths grade improves job opportunities and is often required for college and university courses. Employers look for people who can solve problems and think critically, and students with good Maths qualifications are in high demand worldwide.

Subject contact: Mr D King: d.king@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE Combined Science

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

Combined Science is a compulsory core subject focusing on aspects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Brief introduction:

The course will cover Combined Science through specialising in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students will develop an understanding of the application and theory of scientific principles. You will focus on practical work in all three areas and learn how science in the 21st century is advancing and impacting on the world around us.

Areas of study – what will I learn?

In Biology you will learn about some of the central ideas which underpin life, including ideas about cells, microscopy, enzymes, nutrition, diffusion, osmosis and active transport. You will discover Chemistry and its role in our world. The focus will be around materials and fuels, bonding and reactions. In Physics you will discover universal physics principles such as motion, energy, forces, waves and electricity.

Where might the course take you?

Success in Combined Science will show future employers that you have a logical and enquiring mind and that you will be an asset to any work place. It will ensure that you have the necessary problem solving, logical thinking, team work, and reasoning skills to work in any field of employment. It is anticipated that you will need to achieve a grade 6 or above to go on to study A level Applied Science and A levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Colleges also offer alternative science based qualifications.

Subject contact: Mr G Beale: g.beale@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

Physical Education (Core)

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

Physical Education is a part of the core curriculum at the academy and is compulsory for all students.

Brief introduction:

The PE curriculum aims to inspire all pupils to succeed and excel in competitive sport and other physically-demanding activities. It provides opportunities for pupils to become physically confident in a way which supports their health and fitness. All students will have opportunities to compete in sport and other activities that build character and help to embed values such as fairness and respect.

Areas of study – what will I learn?

Pupils will:

- use and develop a variety of tactics and strategies to overcome opponents in team and individual games [for example, basketball, cricket, football, hockey, netball, rounders, rugby and tennis]
- develop their technique and improve their performance in other competitive sports,[for example, athletics and gymnastics], or other physical activities [for example, dance]
- take part in activities in a range of environments which present intellectual and physical challenges and which encourage pupils to work in a team, building on trust and developing skills to solve problems, either individually or as a group
- evaluate their performances compared to previous ones and demonstrate improvement across a range of physical activities to achieve their personal best

Where might the course take you?

PE lends itself to a range of careers in sports and fitness as well as other industries that you may not have considered before. For example, did you know that many nutritionists, physical therapists and chiropractors have a degree in PE? Some careers that you could consider doing with PE include:

- Sports science
- PE teacher
- Physiotherapist
- Professional sportsperson
- Sports coach/consultant
- Sports policy at local and national level
- Diet and fitness instructor
- Personal trainer

Subject contact: Mr Eldridge r.eldridge@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

Humanities and Languages

GCSE Geography

GCSE History

GCSE French

GCSE Spanish

GCSE Geography

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- Great for students who are curious about the world.
- Builds on skills from Years 7, 8, and 9.
- Useful for many A-level subjects and university courses.

What will I learn?

You will develop a better understanding of the world, both locally (Hastings & UK) and globally, exploring topics like development, natural disasters, and the environment.

Geography helps you:

- Understand how natural events affect people.
- Analyse how humans impact the environment.
- See how places change over time.
- Develop skills in communication, map reading, ICT, problem-solving, and analysis.
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How will I be assessed?

You will take three exams at the end of Year 11:

Paper 1 (35%) – Physical Geography (earthquakes, climate change, ecosystems, rivers, coasts).
Paper 2 (35%) – Human Geography (cities, development, UK economy, resources).
Paper 3 (30%) – Geographical Applications (fieldwork in Hastings, map analysis, and a pre-release exam topic).

Where could this course take you?

Geography provides transferable skills useful for many careers, such as:

Town planning, teaching, transport, tourism, logistics, environmental science, surveying, and international development.

It is a versatile subject that helps with problem-solving and critical thinking—skills that are valued in all subjects and careers. Many universities offer related degrees in earth sciences, environmental science, geology, international relations, and town planning.

Subject contact: Ms D Megit – d.megit@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE History

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- Great for students planning to take A-levels or go to university.
- Valued by employers in media, law, education, government, and public services (police, fire service, etc.).

What will I learn?

This course will develop your reading, writing, thinking, speaking, and listening skills. You will learn to analyse, evaluate, and interpret historical events, debate key ideas, and understand how the world has changed over time.

Key Topics:

- Medicine in Britain (1250–present) & WWI trenches (1914–1918) – how medicine developed and its impact on soldiers.
- Elizabethan England (1558–1588) – the key events of Elizabeth I's reign.
- The American West (1835–1895) – life and expansion in 19th-century America.
- Weimar and Nazi Germany (1918–1939) – how Hitler rose to power and life in Nazi Germany.

Where could this course take you?

History is excellent preparation for A-levels in History, Politics, and Sociology. It also leads to careers in teaching, law, government, journalism, media, museums, libraries, and research.

History teaches critical thinking, analysis, and communication skills, which are valued in many professions.

Subject contact: Mr Stinson : ja.stinson@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE French

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- This course is great for students who enjoy languages and travel.
- French is spoken in 29 countries, creating many opportunities for study and work.

What will I learn?

You will develop skills in:

- Reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- Grammar and vocabulary to help you understand and use French confidently.

Key topics include:

My personal world – talking about yourself and family.
Lifestyle and wellbeing – health, hobbies, and daily life.
My neighbourhood – describing where you live.
Media and technology – using the internet and social media.
Studying and my future – school, jobs, and career plans.
Travel and tourism – holidays and exploring new places.

Where could this course take you?

Speaking another language is useful in business, education, tourism, and translation. Employers value language skills, as they can improve job prospects and open doors to global opportunities.

French is also part of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), which helps keep your future options open for further study.

Experiencing a country where French is spoken is a great way to improve your skills. The school runs trips abroad, depending on student interest.

Subject contact: Mrs Antonucci – v.antonucci@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE Spanish

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- Ideal for students interested in languages and travel.
- Spanish is spoken in 21 countries, creating many opportunities for study and work.

What will I learn?

You will develop skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, while also learning grammar and vocabulary to help you communicate confidently.

Key topics include:

My personal world – talking about yourself and family.
Lifestyle and wellbeing – health, hobbies, and daily life.
My neighbourhood – describing where you live.
Media and technology – using the internet and social media.
Studying and my future – school, jobs, and career plans.
Travel and tourism – holidays and exploring new places.

Where could this course take you?

Speaking another language is useful in business, education, tourism, and translation. Employers value language skills, as they can improve job prospects and open doors to global opportunities.

Spanish is also part of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), which helps keep future study options open.

Experiencing a Spanish-speaking country improves language skills, and the school offers trips abroad, depending on student interest.

Subject contact: Mrs Antonucci – v.antonucci@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

Creative Subjects

GCSE Design Technology (Resistant Materials)

GCSE Design Technology (Textiles)

GCSE Drama

GCSE Art

GCSE Photography

BTEC Performing Arts

GCSE Design and Technology (Resistant Materials)

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- A mix of practical and theory work in design, modelling, and making.
- Develops problem-solving, creativity, and attention to detail.

What will I learn?

You will learn to design and create products using materials like wood, metal, and plastic. You will also use various tools, equipment, and new technologies (e.g., 3D printing) to develop and test your ideas.

Key Topics:

- New and emerging technologies – including 3D printing.
- Energy storage and generation – how materials and systems are powered.
- Modern and smart materials – materials that react to their environment.
- Systems approach to designing – planning and problem-solving.
- Mechanical and electronic devices – how products function.
- Properties of materials – understanding how different materials work.

How will I be assessed?

Coursework (50%) – A practical project set by the exam board.
Exam (50%) – Includes multiple-choice, short, and long-answer questions.

Where could this course take you?

This course complements STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths) and is useful for careers in:

Architecture, product design, carpentry, engineering, interior design, car design, jewellery making, mechanics, and electrical trades.

Educational trips and workshops may also be available to enhance your learning.

Subject contact: Mrs T White: t.white@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE Design and Technology (Textiles)

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- Ideal for students who enjoy design and creativity.
- A mix of practical and theory work in textiles, fashion, and new technologies.
- Develops attention to detail, problem-solving, and presentation skills.

What will I learn?

You will explore all areas of textiles, from fabrics and colour to designing and making products. You will also use modern technology to create and develop design ideas. The course is 50% practical and 50% theory.

Key Topics:

- Fashion trends and influential designers
- Types of fabrics and their properties
- Computer-aided design and laser cutting
- Fabric embellishment techniques
- Using sublimation printing and heat pressing
- Smart and modern textiles – including photochromic, thermochromic, and hydrochromic pigments

How will I be assessed?

Coursework (50%) – A practical project set by the exam board.
Exam (50%) – Includes multiple-choice, short, and long-answer questions.

Where could this course take you?

This course helps develop creativity, problem-solving, teamwork, and organisation skills, which are useful in any career. It also provides a strong foundation for:

- A-Level Product Design (Textiles)
- Higher education courses in fashion, textiles, and design
- Careers in fashion, interior design, product design, and textile technology

Students may also have the chance to attend educational trips and workshops to enhance their skills.

Subject contact: Mrs T White: t.white@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE Drama

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- Ideal for students interested in the creative industry and further education.
- Develops confidence, teamwork, creativity, and public speaking skills.
- Great for students who enjoy performing, scriptwriting, or theatre production.

What will I learn?

You will study acting, theatre production, and performance techniques, as well as:

Script performance – acting in plays.
Devising drama – creating original performances.
Technical theatre – lighting, sound, and puppetry.
Theatre analysis – studying plays and live performances.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1 (40%) – Written exam (1hr 45min) covering drama knowledge, set texts, and theatre review.
Component 2 (40%) – Devised performance and a 2,500-word portfolio.
Component 3 (20%) – Two live performances assessed by an examiner.

Where could this course take you?

Drama is valued in careers such as:

Acting, directing, writing, teaching, law, politics, psychology, and media.
Employers and universities highly regard Drama GCSE for its focus on communication, confidence, and creativity.

Subject contacts: Ms F Grant: f.grant@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE Art, Craft and Design

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- Ideal for creative and independent students who enjoy experimenting with different materials and techniques.
- You need to be organised, motivated, and willing to work outside of lessons.

What will I learn?

You will develop your artistic skills through practical work, exploring different materials and techniques. You will also study historical and contemporary artists and experiment with their styles. Keeping a high-quality sketchbook is an essential part of the course, as is completing regular homework to support your coursework.

Key Areas of Study:

Drawing – using pencil, ink, charcoal, and pastels.
Painting – working with watercolours, acrylics, and inks.
Collage and sculpture – using paper, fabrics, wire, and Modroc.
Printmaking – including lino, poly-board, and etching.
Photography – taking and editing images for creative projects.

How will I be assessed?

Coursework (60%) – ongoing projects throughout the course.
Exam project (40%) – a 12-week externally set project (Jan-April).

Where could this course take you?

GCSE Art and Design can lead to careers in graphic design, architecture, fashion, photography, fine art, teaching, web design, journalism, styling, museum curation, and art therapy.

Subject contact: Mr King: da.king@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE Photographic Art

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- Perfect for creative, organised students who enjoy working with computers and exploring different artistic styles.
- No need to own a camera – all equipment will be provided.
- Basic computer skills (PowerPoint, OneDrive, Teams) are useful.

What will I learn?

You will develop technical and creative skills in photography, including:

- Learning how to take high-quality photographs.
- Using digital and manual techniques to create unique images.
- Editing photos with Photoshop.
- Researching and experimenting with different artistic influences.
- Presenting work in portfolios and on boards.
- Exploring composition, lighting, and visual storytelling.
- You will also complete photoshoots and research as homework, building a portfolio throughout the course.

Key Topics:

History of Photography – how photography has evolved.
Darkroom Techniques – creating photograms.
Manual Photography – using pinhole cameras.
Fundamentals of Photography – mastering composition.
Creative Projects – experimenting with colour, contrast, and lighting.
Street Photography – exploring the local area.
Creative Briefs – responding to set themes using learned skills.

How will I be assessed?

Coursework (60%) – A portfolio of research, experiments, and photos from the first lesson onwards.
Exam Project (40%) – A 12-week creative project (Jan-April) based on a theme set by the exam board.

Where could this course take you?

Photography opens doors to careers in:

Digital arts, animation, graphic design, film, advertising, travel, fashion, forensics, portraiture, and editorial photography.

Subject contact: Mr King: da.king@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

BTEC Tech Award Performing Arts

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

• Suitable for pupils interested in acting, dance, musical theatre, or behind-the-scenes roles such as design and production.
• Develops confidence, communication, teamwork, and performance skills through hands-on projects.
• A strong option for students who prefer coursework and practical assessment alongside some external assessment.

What will I learn?

You will explore how professional performances are created and develop your own performance or design skills through workshops, rehearsals, and live performance work. You will work both individually and as part of a group, responding to real performance briefs. The course is mostly practical, with written work used to support planning, reflection, and evaluation.

Key Topics:

• Exploring professional performances and performance styles
• Acting, dance, musical theatre, or design skills
• Rehearsal techniques and performance processes
• Working effectively as part of a creative team
• Responding to a performance brief and stimulus
• Reflecting on performance skills and development

How will I be assessed?

Coursework (60%) – Two internally assessed components based on practical performance or design work, set by Pearson and moderated externally.
External Assessment (40%) – A practical task where students respond to a performance brief and take part in a workshop performance under supervised conditions.

Where could this course take you?

This course develops creativity, confidence, teamwork, organisation, and communication skills, which are valuable in many careers. It also provides a strong foundation for:

• Level 3 Performing Arts or Production courses
• A-Levels (including Drama, Dance, or other creative subjects)
• Careers in performing arts, theatre, media, events, education, and creative industries

Students may also have opportunities to take part in performances, workshops, and trips to support their learning and build confidence.

Subject contact: Ms F Grant: f.grant@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

Ms Hart: el.hart@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

Breadth Subjects

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

BTEC Health and Social Care

GCSE Sociology

OCR Sports Studies

GCSE Triple Science

GCSE Religious Studies

GCSE Computer Science

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- Covers all key aspects of food, nutrition, and preparation.
- A mix of theory and practical work to build knowledge and skills.

Areas of study – what will I learn?

You will study:

- **Food preparation skills** – cooking techniques and presentation.
- **Nutrition and health** – understanding balanced diets.
- **Food safety** – hygiene and handling food safely.
- **Food science** – how ingredients react and change.
- **Food provenance** – where food comes from and sustainability.
- **Food choice** – factors affecting what we eat.

The course is mostly **theory-based**, with **practical lessons** to apply your knowledge.

Course assessment – how will I be assessed?

- **Coursework (50%)**
  - **Task 1:** Food investigation (10 hours) – 15% of GCSE.
  - **Task 2:** Food preparation (20 hours, including a 3-hour practical) – 35% of GCSE.
- **Written exam (50%)** – 1 hour 45 minutes.

Both coursework tasks include research, testing, and evaluation.

How will this help me in the future?

The food industry is one of the **biggest and fastest-growing industries** in the world. Over 20% of the UK's top 100 companies are in food manufacturing, and the industry employs **over 650,000 people** with a **£66 billion turnover**. There are also **global opportunities** for work and travel.

Career options include:

Dietitian, nutritionist, food buyer, product development, chef, caterer, food journalist, environmental health officer, supermarket management, teacher.

Subject contact: Mr R Anderson: ro.anderson@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

BTEC Tech Award in Health and Social Care

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- Ideal for students interested in careers in healthcare or social care, such as nursing, midwifery, social work, or care assistance.
- Focuses on understanding how to care for and support people at different stages of life.

What will I learn?

This course covers three key areas:

- Human Lifespan Development – how people grow and change throughout their lives.
- Health and Social Care Services and Values – the role of professionals in caring for others.
- Health and Wellbeing – factors that affect health and how to improve it.

How will I be assessed?

Components 1 & 2 – Coursework-based (internal assessment).
Component 3 – External exam on Health and Wellbeing.

Where could this course take you?

This qualification can lead to further study in Health and Social Care at Level 3, preparing students for employment, apprenticeships, or university degrees in healthcare or social care.

Future careers include:

Nurse, midwife, doctor, social worker, physiotherapist, pharmacist, healthcare assistant, care worker.

The health and social care sector is one of the fastest-growing industries in the UK, with increasing demand for skilled professionals.

Subject contact: Mr C Dean: c.dean@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE Sociology

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- Ideal for students interested in people and society.
- Explores different viewpoints on how people behave and what affects their lives.

What will I learn?

You will explore key questions about British society, such as:

- Why are families so important?
- Why do girls often perform better in school than boys?
- What makes some people more likely to commit crime?
- Why is there such a big gap between the richest and poorest?

Key Topics:

The Sociological Approach – how sociologists study society.
Social Structures and Processes – how society is organised.
Families – different family types and their roles.
Education – how schools impact people's lives.
Crime and Deviance – why people commit crimes.
Social Stratification – class, wealth, and inequality.
Sociological Research Methods – how sociologists gather data.

How will I be assessed?

Two exams at the end of Year 11 (1 hour 45 minutes each, 50% each).
Paper 1: Families, education, and social theory.
Paper 2: Crime, inequality, and social theory.
Both papers include short and extended-answer questions to test your understanding.

Where could this course take you?

Sociology is a great foundation for A-Level Sociology, Psychology, Politics, and other Social Sciences.

It can also lead to careers in:

Teaching, social work, nursing, the police, law, and journalism.

This course helps you develop a deeper understanding of real-world issues and encourages you to think critically about society.

Subject contact: Mr Lewis Hall: L.Hall@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

OCR Sports Studies

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

This course is great for students who:

- Have a passion for sport and physical activity.
- Want a career in coaching, fitness, or the leisure industry.
- Enjoy sport but don't want to be assessed on practical ability.
- Are happy to complete coursework and assignments.

What will I learn?

This course combines theory and practical knowledge to help students understand key areas of health, fitness, and sports performance.

- Reducing the risk of sports injuries & dealing with medical conditions (Exam)
- How to prepare for sport safely.
- How to handle injuries and common medical conditions.
- Applying the principles of training & fitness (Coursework)
- Conducting and evaluating fitness tests.
- Designing and improving training programmes.
- The body's response to physical activity & sports technology (Coursework – Optional)
- How the body systems work during exercise.
- How technology helps monitor and improve performance.

How will I be assessed?

1 Exam (externally assessed).
2 Coursework units (internally assessed).

Where could this course take you?

This course prepares students for careers in:

Sports Science, Physiotherapy, Nutrition, Coaching, PE Teaching, Personal Training, and Sports Centre Management.

It also supports further study in Sports Science, Sports Physiology, and related fields.

Subject contact: Mr Eldridge r.eldridge@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE Triple Science

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

- Ideal for high-achieving students with a strong interest in science.
- Leads to three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.
- Recommended for students considering careers in science, medicine, engineering, or technology.
- Students must have a target grade of 6 or above and a strong work ethic.

What will I learn?

Triple Science covers the same core topics as Combined Science but in greater depth. You will study:

Biology
Cells, enzymes, nutrition, diffusion, osmosis, active transport.
The brain, the kidney, and how the body functions.

Chemistry
Materials, fuels, bonding, chemical reactions, and plastics.
The chemistry of manufacturing and how it impacts the world.

Physics
Motion, energy, forces, waves, electricity, and radioactivity.
The principles that explain how the universe works.

You will also develop practical skills and learn about the latest scientific advancements.

How will I be assessed?

Three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.
Six exams in total (two per subject), each 1 hour 45 minutes long.
Two tiers of entry:
Higher Tier: Grades 4-9
Foundation Tier: Grades 1-5
Most Triple Science students take the Higher Tier.

Where could this course take you?

Triple Science is highly valued by colleges, universities, and employers. It provides a strong foundation for A-Level Science and careers in:

Medicine, Dentistry, Engineering, Forensic Science, Pharmaceuticals, and Technology.
This course is perfect for students who want to push themselves and explore science in depth.

Subject contact: Mr G Beale: g.beale@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE Religious Studies

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

This course is for students who enjoy exploring big questions about life, beliefs, and ethics. It will challenge you to think about topics like the existence of God, the afterlife, abortion, and the death penalty.

What will I learn?

You will study different religious, philosophical, and ethical perspectives, learning to compare beliefs and evaluate their arguments.

Key topics include:

- Buddhist and Christian beliefs and practices
- Human relationships (family, sexuality, etc.)
- Religion and life (abortion, euthanasia, animal rights, etc.)
- Crime and punishment (why we punish people, debates on the death penalty, etc.)
- War and peace (when war is justified, pacifism, etc.)
- The existence of God (arguments for and against)
- Human Rights and Social Justice (wealth, religious freedom, etc.)

How will I be assessed?

You will take two written exams at the end of the course, each lasting 1 hour 45 minutes and worth 50% of your final grade:

Paper 1: Covers Buddhism and Christianity.
Paper 2: Covers ethical and philosophical themes from a religious and non-religious perspective.

Both exams include short and extended answer questions, testing your understanding of the topics studied.

Where could this course take you?

This subject is great preparation for A Levels in Religious Studies, Philosophy, and Social Sciences. It is well-regarded by universities, including top institutions. In fact, more Oxford students studying Maths in 2011 had A-Level Religious Studies than those who had Economics, Physics, or Business Studies!

The skills you develop—critical thinking, debating, and evaluating arguments—are useful in many careers, including law, politics, journalism, education, and social work.

Subject contact: Mr Chris Dean: c.dean@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk

GCSE Computer Science

Who is this course suitable for and why choose it?

This course is for students who are curious about how the digital world works. If you enjoy logical puzzles, breaking down complex problems, and understanding the "brains" behind your favourite apps and devices, this is for you.

What will I learn?

You will dive into the inner workings of computer systems and develop the computational thinking skills needed to write your own programs.

Key topics include:

- Computer Systems and Hardware (CPU architecture, memory, storage, and how computers are built)
- Data Representation (How computers use binary to store images, sound, and text)
- Networks and Protocols (How the internet works, the Cloud, and wireless connectivity)
- Cyber Security (Threats like hacking and malware, and how we defend against)
- Algorithms (Designing step-by-step solutions, searching, and sorting data)
- Programming Fundamentals (Writing code, using variables, loops, and data types)
- Logic and Languages (Boolean logic gates, truth tables, and high-level vs. low-level code)

How will I be assessed?

The OCR J277 specification consists of two written exams:

Paper 1: Computer Systems: Hardware, networks, security, and systems software.
50% (1hr 30m)
Paper 2: Algorithms & Programming: Logic, searching/sorting algorithms, and Python code.
50% (1hr 30m)

Where could this course take you?

Computer Science is one of the most highly regarded subjects by universities and employers because it proves you have a rigorous, analytical mind. Its great preparation for A-Levels in Computer Science, Mathematics, and Engineering. Essential for software engineering, cybersecurity, data science careers
Even if you don't become a programmer, the critical thinking and problem-solving skills are invaluable in law, medicine, finance, and business management.

Subject contact: Mr Chris Bashford: c.bashford@thestleonardsacademy.org.uk#