



**WEST KIRBY
SCHOOL &
COLLEGE**

Changing Children's Lives

***Year 9 Options
Information 2026***



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Welcome all Parents, Carers and Pupils to our Year 9 Options Information 2026

Year 9 Options are courses that offer you an opportunity to choose different subjects from the curriculum to study in more detail and obtain a variety of qualifications. This booklet gives you some information about the options which are on offer in our school. Please take the opportunity to talk to or email our dedicated staff to find out more about the subjects that peak your interest.

Alongside your chosen options, all pupils will study the following compulsory subjects:

- GCSE English (AQA)
- GCSE Maths (Pearson)
- GCSE Science (AQA)
- Study Skills
- PSHE
- PE
- Preparation for Adulthood

You will be able to choose **four options, one from each group** on the following page. It is important that you consider your choices and choose subjects that you are interested in as you will be learning them for two years.

We look forward to seeing what path you choose.

Kind regards,

Mr Hicks, Headteacher



Year 9 Options 2026

Option Group	Subject	Staff
1	Animal Care - SEG Level 1 Award	Miss Ellis
	Art and Design - GCSE/Arts Award	Mrs Davies
	Classical Civilisation - GCSE	Mr Hulme
	Digital Information Technology - GCSE	Mr Macdonald
	Health and Social Care - BTEC	Mrs Brown
2	Creative iMedia - Cambridge National Level 1/Level 2	Mr Saunders
	Drama - Arts Award	Ms Millington
	History - GCSE	Mr Dowds
	Horticulture - ASDAN Short Course	Mr Jones/Ms Harris
	Sport - BTEC	Mr Musgrave
3	English Literature - GCSE	Ms Spence
	Geography - GCSE	Mr Cox
	Music - GCSE/Arts Award	Mrs Dooley
	Three Dimensional Design - GCSE/NCFE	Mr Saunders
4	Duke of Edinburgh Award	Mrs Draycott
	Food Technology - BTEC	Ms Meegan
	German - FCSE/GCSE	Mrs Brown
	Graphics - GCSE	Mr Macdonald

Option Group 1

Animal Care SEG Level 1 Award

Subject Lead - Miss Ellis
zellis@wkrs.co.uk



This is an option for you if you love animals and you would like to work with or study animals when you leave West Kirby School and College.

Within this vocational course you will take part in a variety of exercises and activities to explore the Animal Care industry such as:

- Gaining background information on the care of animals
- Understanding the appropriate care of small animals in order to ensure their health and wellbeing
- Visits to animal shelters, farms and a zoo to see how animals are cared for in different environments.

The SEG award is equivalent to a GCSE, but is mostly practical based, giving you the opportunity to develop experience and skills that are relevant to the industry.

Assessment

Coursework. Pupils are awarded credits which are achieved through completion of study units and meeting learning outcomes.

Where can this take you?

You could consider further & higher education options including veterinary science, animal biology, conservation studies, animal care roles, veterinary assistance, animal welfare and zoology. Animal care apprenticeships and employment include animal care assistant, veterinary care assistant, animal rehabilitation worker and wildlife conservationist. You may also explore apprenticeships and employment options in zoos, aquariums and animal shelters, as well as with veterinary practices.



Option Group 1

Art and Design GCSE/Arts Award

Subject Lead - Mrs Davies
rdavies@wkrs.co.uk



Art and Design pupils work towards gaining an Arts Award qualification or a GCSE with the Eduqas exam board. The qualification allows pupils to explore a range of media and techniques to find out where their strengths lie.

Pupils are able to choose their own theme or one set by the teacher such as manga, portraiture, superheroes, anime and even tattoo design. Pupils research a theme, experiment with different media and then produce a final piece or pieces. To help address all the assessment objectives pupils will have the opportunity to visit galleries and also have the opportunity to work with a practising artist.

Assessment

The GCSE comprises 60% coursework and 40% exam. The coursework is produced over two years and the exam over a ten week period, researching, experimenting, reviewing and refining ideas and then producing a final piece.

Where can this take you?

A GCSE in Art can lead to careers in fine arts, graphic design, animation, illustration and fashion design. You could also pursue a degree in art history, architecture or interior design or explore creative roles in advertising and media. Employment and apprenticeships in art-related fields include opportunities in graphic design, illustration, printmaking, animation and digital art. You may also find apprenticeships in interior design, exhibition design or working with fashion houses as a junior designer or stylist.



Classical Civilisation GCSE

Subject Lead - Mr Hulme
shulme@wkrs.co.uk

Our GCSE in Classical Civilisation provides students with a broad, coherent and rewarding study of the culture of the classical world. They study elements of the literature and visual/material culture of Greece and Rome, and develop an understanding of their social, historical and cultural contexts. This will include investigating a variety of areas in Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, including the Roman Army, Heracles, The Afterlife, and Athens and Sparta at war.

Assessment

The course is assessed through two exams focusing on topics of pupils choosing including:

- Myth and Religion
- War and Warfare

Where can this take you?

This subject can lead to a variety of pathways including archaeology, history, museum curation, law and teaching. You could pursue a degree in Classics, Ancient History or become a researcher or curator in heritage institutions. Apprenticeships and employment roles that you could consider in heritage and culture, such as museum and gallery assistant roles or archaeological technician positions, can follow from a Classical Civilisations GCSE. You could also look into roles in historical research, archive management or as a conservator in a heritage institution.



Option Group 1

Digital Information Technology GCSE

Subject Lead - Mr Macdonald
gmacdonald@wkrs.co.uk

The Digital Information Technology course takes a learner through the drives behind technology and its practical uses in the workplace. The course combines critical understanding of decision making and collaborative work with the digital skill set to support these tasks.

Assessment:

There are three components in the course:

Component 1 - Exploring user interface design principles and project planning techniques

- Learners will develop their understanding of what makes an effective user interface and how to effectively manage a project.
- They will use this understanding to plan, design and create a user interface.

Component 2 - Collecting, presenting and interpreting data

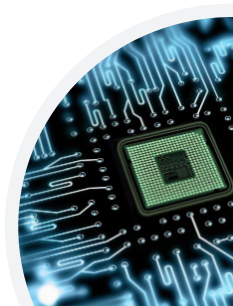
- Learners will understand the characteristics of data and information and how they help organisations in decision making.
- They will use data manipulation methods to create a dashboard to present and draw conclusions from information.

Component 3 - Effective digital working practices

- An externally set and marked exam sat in formal conditions. Pupils would be entered for this in the second year of their course.
- Learners will explore how organisations use digital systems and the wider implications associated with their use.

Where can this take you?

This qualification opens doors to careers in IT support, network administration, cybersecurity, web development and digital marketing. You could also explore further education with a degree in Computer Science, Software Engineering or Information Technology. An apprenticeship or careers in Digital Information Technology can lead to roles such as IT support technician, systems administrator, cybersecurity specialist and web developer. You could also explore apprenticeships in software development, network management, and digital marketing.



Option Group 1



Health and Social Care BTEC

Subject Lead - Mrs Brown
sbrown@wkrs.co.uk

In this Level 1 Introductory course, you will focus on developing transferable and Health and Social Care sector skills. You will gain an understanding of both health and childcare professions and explore some related topics including keeping active, healthy living, preschool activities, reading and numeracy.

This BTEC course is an excellent opportunity for pupils who enjoy looking after themselves and other people and are interested in working in the healthcare profession when they leave school.

Assessment

Internal assessments.

Where can this take you?

A BTEC in Health and Social Care can lead to careers in healthcare management, social work, nursing, midwifery, social policy or public health. Health and Social Care apprenticeships and career routes can lead to roles such as care assistant, support worker, social care practitioner, healthcare assistant and youth worker. There are also apprenticeships in health administration, nursing or as a mental health support worker in hospitals or social care settings.



Option Group 2

Creative iMedia Cambridge National Level 1/Level 2

Subject Lead - Mr Saunders
csaunders@wkrs.co.uk



Creative iMedia is a course that will allow you to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of digital media (Video games, online publishing e.g. websites or online documents, books, interactive media e.g. online programs or travel guides). You will develop learning and practical skills that can be applied to real-life contexts and work situations. This is a course for someone who can think creatively and innovatively.

There are two qualifications available:

OCR Cambridge National - Level 1/2 'Award' - Creative iMedia. Equivalent to 1/2 GCSE.

A one year course with two modules:

- Pre-production skills (examination)
- Digital graphics (coursework)

OCR Cambridge National - Level 1/2 'Certificate' - Creative iMedia. Equivalent to 1 GCSE.

A two year course with six modules:

- Pre-production skills (examination)
- Digital photography
- Digital graphics (coursework)
- Creating a digital animation
- Creating a digital video sequence
- Storytelling with comic strips

Assessment

Centre assessed tasks and one written paper

Where can this take you?

This qualification opens opportunities in digital media, including video editing, web design, animation, game development and graphic design. You could continue into a degree in media production, digital marketing or film and television. With an apprenticeship or careers in Creative iMedia, you could work in roles such as graphic designer, digital content creator, multimedia specialist, video production assistant or web developer.



Option Group 2



Drama Arts Award

Subject Lead - Ms Millington
lmillington@wkrs.co.uk

The Arts Award is a nationally recognised award. The Bronze Award is comparable to GCSE Grade 1-3, and the Silver Award compares to GCSE Grade 4 –9.

In studying for the Arts Award, pupils have the opportunity to:

- Research Arts practitioners and careers opportunities
- Visit and review professional performances
- Improve their skills in their chosen area of the arts
- Create performance pieces
- Develop their leadership skills by running workshops for other pupils within the school.

Assessment

Coursework - Evidence in an individual arts log/portfolio.

Where can this take you?

An Arts Award can lead to careers in acting, directing, theatre management and performance arts education. Further education in performing arts, stage production or theatre design, even teaching is an option. Drama apprenticeships and employment include roles such as theatre assistant, production assistant, stage manager, lighting technician and costume assistant. You could also explore careers in film and TV production, theatre administration or as an events coordinator in the arts.



Option Group 2

History GCSE

Subject Lead - Mr Dowds
ddowds@wkrs.co.uk

GCSE History can support you in learning more about the history of Britain and that of the wider world. The study of History at GCSE will inspire you to deepen your understanding of the people, periods and events of the past, whilst enabling you to think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, make informed decisions, and develop perspective and judgement. History is a fantastic subject to learn at West Kirby School and College and with the right commitment and work ethic, you will reach your full potential. You will also have the opportunity to take part in a residential trip to explore a Norman Historic environment site.

Assessment

100% external examination - two papers, 2 hours each.

Paper 1 - Understanding the Modern World (50%) - Germany 1890-1945 Democracy & Dictatorship and Conflict and Tension - The Inter War Years 1918-1939.

Paper 2 - Shaping the Nation (50%) - Britain, Power and the People c1170 - present day, and Norman England, c1066-c1100.

Where can this take you?

History can lead to careers in teaching, heritage management, archival work, politics, journalism and research. University degrees in history, teaching, law, archaeology or museum studies can further enhance career prospects. Apprenticeships or careers related to History can include roles in museum and archive management, heritage conservation, or as a researcher for historical sites or institutions. You might also look into roles such as tour guide, heritage site assistant or in publishing for historical content.



Option Group 2

Horticulture ASDAN Short Course

Subject Lead - Mr Jones/Ms Harris
mjones@wkrs.co.uk/jharris@wkrs.co.uk

Horticulture offers students the opportunity to learn and demonstrate the skills and techniques used in gardening. Pupils work towards the ASDAN Short Course in Gardening. The flexibility of ASDAN's Short Courses means that they can be carried out in a variety of settings, over a time period to suit the individual or co-ordinating centre.

This includes choices of:

- Planting in the garden
- Growing food on an allotment
- Working undercover
- Wildlife in the garden
- Construction in the garden

Gardening promotes a healthier lifestyle and can have a positive impact on your mental health and wellbeing. Horticulture provides opportunities to develop fine and gross motor skills whilst also developing a new set of skills. It could become a new hobby, which can improve self-esteem and confidence. Being outdoors and doing something you enjoy can help with self-regulation.

Assessment

- Certification is available for 10–60 hours of work
- Portfolio-based

Where can this take you?

A career in Horticulture offers diverse opportunities in plant science, landscaping and environmental management. Further study options include degrees in horticulture, landscape architecture or environmental science. Apprenticeships and employment in gardening, landscaping or garden design provide hands-on experience. Employment pathways include roles like horticulturist, landscape gardener, groundskeeper or nursery manager. With a growing focus on sustainability, careers in urban greening, conservation and sustainable farming are also on the rise.



Sport

BTEC Introductory Level 1

Subject Lead - Mr Musgrave
rmusgrave@wkrs.co.uk

The BTEC Introductory Level 1 in Sport is a foundational qualification designed to introduce learners to the world of sport and physical activity. It is aimed at individuals who like sport and want to learn more about the sector, focusing on basic principles including fitness, teamwork, and health. It will provide you with the essential skills, knowledge, and understanding needed to progress in the field. The knowledge gained combines theoretical concepts with practical, hands-on activities.

Core units include:

- Personal Progression Plan and goal setting for the future
- Understanding the role of physical activity in health and well-being.
- Developing teamwork and communication skills through sport.
- Introduction to fitness and training techniques.

Assessment

Coursework-based, with no formal exams. Learners complete assignments, practical tasks, and projects.

Where can this take you?

A BTEC in Sport can lead to careers in coaching, sports management, fitness training, sports psychology and physiotherapy. You may also consider pursuing a degree in sports science, kinesiology or sports therapy. Sport apprenticeships and career pathways can lead to roles as fitness instructors, sports coaches, personal trainers or sports development assistants. There are also opportunities in sports management, sports marketing and sports therapy, as well as in facilities management for sports venues.



Option Group 3

English Literature GCSE

Subject Lead - Ms Spence
rspence@wkrs.co.uk



Studying AQA GCSE English Literature is an exciting opportunity to explore powerful stories, unforgettable characters, and important themes that shape our world. From Shakespeare's dramatic plots to modern plays and poetry, this subject helps you develop critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills—essential for any career path. English Literature encourages you to see different perspectives, express your ideas confidently, and appreciate the beauty of language. Whether you love discussing big ideas, enjoy storytelling, or want to improve your writing, this subject will challenge and inspire you. Choose English Literature and discover the power of words!

The texts we study include:

- Romeo and Juliet
- Blood Brothers
- A Christmas Carol
- Power and Conflict poetry anthology.

Assessment

Two written exams (it is a closed-book exam, meaning students cannot take copies of the texts into the exam).

Paper One - Shakespeare and the 19th century novel - 1 hour 45 minutes

Paper Two - Modern texts and poetry - 2 hours 15 minutes

Where can this take you?

A GCSE in English Literature can lead to careers in writing, publishing, journalism and education. A degree in English, creative writing or communications can further your career options in media and literature-related fields. An apprenticeship or careers in English-related fields can lead to roles in publishing, content writing, editorial assistance or social media management. You could also explore apprenticeships in marketing, journalism or PR or work as an assistant in a library or archive.

BOOKS ARE MAGIC

Option Group 3

Geography GCSE

Subject Lead - Mr Cox
ecox@wkrs.co.uk



GCSE Geography will inspire you to become a global citizen. By exploring your own place in the world, you will understand the different attitudes and values that people have towards the environment and to the sustainability of our planet. GCSE Geography is a fantastic subject for developing a wide range of employable skills due to its combination of Science, Humanities and Mathematics.

Assessment

The GCSE course is split into three units, each with an external assessment:

- **Unit 1** - Physical Geography - 90 minute exam, worth 35%
- **Unit 2** – Human Geography - 90 minute exam, worth 35%
- **Unit 3** – Geographical Applications - 75 minute exam, worth 30%

Where can this take you?

Geography can lead to careers in environmental consultancy, urban planning, tourism management and geographical information systems (GIS). Further study in Geography, environmental science or urban planning is a natural progression. Geography apprenticeships or career routes can lead to roles in environmental consultancy, land surveying, urban planning or GIS (Geographic Information Systems) analysis. You might also look into roles in environmental management, sustainability practices or climate change adaptation.



Option Group 3

Music GCSE or Arts Award

Subject Lead - Mrs Dooley
jdooley@wkrs.co.uk

If you love to listen to music and play a musical instrument or sing, then this is the course for you! You will study either GCSE or Arts Award for Music.

GCSE

You will follow the OCR GCSE in Music and will also take Grade 1 Theory of Music. The GCSE comprises of three parts:

1. **Composition** - Students will compose 2 pieces of music - 30%
2. **Performance** - Students will perform 2 pieces of music. One solo and one ensemble piece - 30%
3. **Listening** - Students will take a listening paper covering 5 aspects of music - 40%

You will be expected to take part in an instrumental lesson either within or outside of school.

Arts Award Music

This course will suit you if you prefer to complete coursework rather than having to take an exam. You will explore musical styles, be an audience member and perform different styles of music. You can also access Music Technology. Students who complete Bronze will be given the opportunity to move on to the Silver Level 2 Award.

Where can this take you?

A Music qualification can lead to careers as a musician, composer, music teacher, sound engineer or music therapist. Further study in music performance, production or music technology is also an option. Music apprenticeships and career pathway include roles such as music technician, sound engineer, event coordinator for live music or studio assistant. You could also look into jobs in music production, performance, teaching or as a music retail assistant.



Option Group 3

Three Dimensional Design GCSE/NCFE

Subject Lead - Mr Saunders
csaunders@wkrs.co.uk

This course provides opportunities for designing and creating prototypes, models or making functional and aesthetic products, objects and environments. You will build on your communication, technical and creative skills while developing logical thinking, organization, and the ability to think outside the box.

Assessment

Assessment comprises of two components:

Component 1: The portfolio unit, and is worth 60% of the overall GCSE grade

Component 2: The externally set assignment where students respond to their chosen starting point from given titles. This is worth 40% of the overall grade.

Where can this take you?

Three Dimensional Design can lead to further studies in product design, architecture, or engineering, offering opportunities to specialize in areas like CAD or 3D modeling. In employment, you could pursue careers as a product designer, architect, or 3D artist, with growing demand in tech and creative industries. Apprenticeships in areas such as carpentry, metalworking, or product prototyping provide practical experience while earning.



Option Group 4

Duke of Edinburgh Award

Subject Lead - Mrs Draycott
ddraycott@wkrs.co.uk

The Duke of Edinburgh Award could be a life changing adventure for you.

You will:

- Be part of an exciting and challenging programme
- Gain a real sense of achievement
- Learn new skills
- Help others
- Have fun
- Make new friends.

The DofE Award programme boosts self-confidence, enhances problem-solving skills, builds resilience and self-esteem and provides a sense of achievement, all of which are key to both personal and professional success. Amongst the many challenges you will face you will get the chance to complete an expedition, camp out and cook for yourselves.

Assessment

Coursework portfolio

Where can this take you?

The Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE) is a prestigious program that builds essential life skills, such as leadership, teamwork, resilience and time management. These qualities are highly valued by employers across all industries, making it an excellent addition to any career pathway. Completing the DofE Award can open doors to apprenticeships and employment in sectors like healthcare, sport, outdoor adventure, forestry, ecotourism, conservation, design and the creative industries. It also provides a strong foundation for further study, whether it's pursuing higher education or vocational qualifications.



Option Group 4

Food Technology BTEC Level 1 and 2

Subject Lead - Ms Meegan
rmeegan@wkrs.co.uk



This course gives you the knowledge, skills and confidence to plan, economise, and enjoy cooking meals at home. Studying Food Technology will encourage you to continue applying skills you have learned to other recipes at home while also inspiring others by passing on your expertise. The course is based on the proposition that being able to cook is an essential life skill which empowers people to make changes that have benefits to health and wellbeing.

Within the course you will look at health and safety including: hygienic food preparation, safe food storage and knife safety. You will be given opportunities to develop your skills in; choosing the right ingredients for a recipe, weighing, measuring and preparing ingredients and a wide range of different cooking techniques. You will also be looking at the nutritional value of foods, learning about planning a meal and timings.

You have the opportunity to study BTEC Level 1 and 2 qualifications.

Assessment

School assessed coursework. You are awarded credits which are achieved through completion of study units and meeting learning outcomes.

Where can this take you?

A BTEC in Food Technology opens pathways into food science, nutrition, product development, and culinary arts. You might consider further study in food engineering, dietetics, or hospitality management. Food Technology apprenticeships and careers include roles in food product development, food safety inspection, quality control and as a chef or kitchen assistant. You might also explore apprenticeships in food marketing, nutrition or within the hospitality and catering industry.



Option Group 4

German FCSE/GCSE

Subject Lead - Mrs Brown
sbrown@wkrs.co.uk

Studying a language at GCSE offers several advantages, including improved cognitive skills like memory and problem-solving, enhanced cultural awareness, increased career opportunities in a globalized world, better communication skills, and a deeper understanding of different perspectives and societies; opening doors to International experiences and personal development beyond the classroom.

Assessment

GCSE: The qualification consists of:

- Three externally-examined papers separately assessing listening, reading and writing
- One speaking assessment set by the exam board and conducted by a teacher.

All assessments are marked by the exam board.

FCSE: Three levels of award are available: Pass, Merit, Distinction. The standard is broadly equivalent to the National Curriculum KS3 Languages programmes of study.

- FCSE is 100% internally assessed by the centre and externally moderated by the exam board.

Topics for both qualifications include: school; free time; staying healthy; holidays.

Where can this take you?

A degree in languages, linguistics, or international business would be a good pathway to further enhance these opportunities. Apprenticeships and career pathways can lead to roles in translation, interpreting, language tutoring and international business support. You could also consider apprenticeships in travel and tourism, international relations or with companies involved in global trade and export.



Pearson Edexcel GCSE

German

Foundation

Andy Holland, Sabine Leitner, Ben Merritt, Lisa Probert



Option Group 4

Graphics GCSE

Subject Lead - Mr Macdonald
gmacdonald@wkrs.co.uk

Graphics is a creative and enjoyable course where you can develop your research skills, problem solving, as well as the ability to work on your own initiative. You have the opportunity to communicate and work in a team and develop an awareness of the world of graphic communication. Graphics helps you to develop your skills in other subjects such as Mathematics, English, Art, ICT and Media.

You will also gain practical skills in:

- Design
- Sketching
- Use of digital media , materials and manufacture, in mainly cards and plastics.

Assessment

The GCSE is comprised of 60% coursework and 40% exam. The coursework is produced over two years and the exam over a ten week period where you will research, experiment, review, and refine ideas and then produce a final piece.

Where can this take you?

With a GCSE in Graphics, you could pursue careers in graphic design, web design, advertising, branding or animation. Further study in graphic design, digital arts or interactive media could be a potential next step. A graphics apprenticeship or employment could involve roles such as junior graphic designer, digital marketing assistant, branding consultant or visual merchandising assistant. You could consider roles in print design, 3D design and user experience (UX) design.





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