



SHERBORNE  
BOYS



**A UNIQUE  
BLEND  
OF PASSION  
+ PERFORMANCE**

Curriculum Options Guidance *for* New Boys



## The Third Form Curriculum

Our Third Form curriculum is broad and varied, offering a mixture of traditional academic subjects alongside a portfolio of stimulating modern options. The result is dynamic and exciting and enables boys to acquire a thorough grounding in the disciplines they need to thrive in future study whilst ensuring that their curriculum is contemporary and relevant.

Complementing this, we believe in the importance of choice: by choosing the subjects they study boys are inspired, engaged and motivated; they learn more, faster and, ultimately, do better. Therefore, complementing the 'core' of English, Maths, Science and Wellbeing, boys enjoy the freedom to shape up to half of their curriculum from a range of stimulating options.

As well as the importance of choice, the Third Form curriculum is also built around the development of 14 core skills, which are taught in five exciting cross-curricular modules.

By working towards shared goals across different subjects, boys develop the aptitudes they need to succeed, both as independent learners eager to explore their passions and also as future GCSE pupils learning to master the competencies they need to thrive at GCSE.

## THIRD FORM CURRICULUM MODULES:

### 1. Identity and relationships

This module encourages boys to explore the memories, experiences, relationships, and values that encompass their sense of self. By considering the beliefs and principles upheld by the School, the country and other societies, they are better able to understand the standards and behaviours that make effective leaders and to follow them as they develop at school.

*Skills incorporated: emotional intelligence and empathy; self-awareness; leadership and values; artistic and aesthetic sensibilities; creativity.*

### 2. Innovations and critical thinking

In this module boys are taught to synthesize information and make connections to interpret information and to draw conclusions. Boys are also encouraged to evaluate ideas and to look at problems by thinking about how one part affects the other or the whole.

*Skills incorporated: understanding challenge; planning and implementation; problem-solving; the ability to think critically, laterally and flexibly.*

### 3. Environment and sustainability

At its core, this module captures the concept that the environmental and economic actions taken now do not diminish the opportunities of future generations. By exploring contemporary issues, boys understand their responsibility in conserving natural resources and learn custodianship of global ecosystems to support the health and wellbeing of others, both now and in the future.

*Skills incorporated: awareness of global concerns; ability to draw conclusions.*

### 4. Digital literacy

Through this module boys develop the capabilities to support living, learning, and working in a digital society. This begins with lower-level skills associated with access and function (e.g. finding, sorting and manipulating) and then progresses to higher-level capabilities (e.g. evaluating, managing and creating information in digital forms).

*Skills incorporated: numeracy; communication; ability to draw conclusions; problem-solving; use of digital tools; being safe and working responsibly.*

### 5. Languages, culture and society

In this module boys learn about the spoken and written expressions, the beliefs, traditions, activities, stories, and routines that make up the identities of certain groups of people. By studying others, boys not only develop an appreciation of other cultures and values but learn to recognise and respect their own.

*Skills incorporated: research; public speaking; team work; understanding different cultures and beliefs; communication.*

### Core Curriculum

In the Third Form, English, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics and 'Wellbeing and Worldviews' form the 'core curriculum', forming a kernel of lessons that, together, take up approximately half of each pupil's timetable. English lessons follow a mixed language and literature syllabus, with a heavy focus on reading and the development of essential literacy skills.

In Mathematics and the Sciences the focus is also skills-based, though boys are taught in sets based on ability with the intention being that, by the end of the year, boys in the top Science sets will follow an accelerated curriculum culminating in Triple Science GCSE with the rest of the year taking Dual Science. In the Third Form all boys complete the same course, so, while there will likely be some movement between sets during their first year at Sherborne, it makes no difference which set your son is in as all boys study the same material.

### RS and Wellbeing

RS and Wellbeing is a new, bespoke course for Third Formers that engages with key relationship, citizenship, financial, and careers education. The RS element covers a variety of religious and non-religious viewpoints which develop thought about important matters such as equality, inclusion and identity.

Real world ethical considerations are covered, exposing pupils to a myriad of different perspectives. Together, the RS and Wellbeing course develops pupils' spiritual, cultural and moral knowledge and understanding, whilst encouraging respect for other people, particularly those with protected characteristics.



## Options choices

Choice is an important part of the curriculum. From the very start boys can choose the subjects they study outside of the core. We do this because we know that boys thrive when they study the subjects they enjoy; they also tend to achieve stronger results. For these reasons your son will be given free choice to pick the subjects he enjoys to complement those in the core curriculum. We do encourage boys to pick a Modern Foreign Language, but it is not mandated: boys are free to pick the options they want from the list below.

Overall, your son will be choosing **five subjects** in total, **one** from each block. The subjects available are:

- Art
- Computer Science
- Design & Technology\*
- Drama
- English as an Additional Language (EAL – for non-native speakers)
- French (please note, this should not be selected if your son has not studied French before)
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Spanish.

Although Spanish and French are the main languages offered, we may be able to arrange paid tuition in other languages if your son has previous experience of them or if you are keen to pursue other options. German, Japanese and Italian, for example, are often requested, either in addition to French / Spanish or as alternatives. If you would like further details, please contact Philip Morrow, Head of Modern Foreign Languages. Please note that any alternative language options are subject to the availability of tutors and are paid extras.

By arrangement Mandarin can also be provided. As Mandarin is offered via a package of bespoke tuition (similar to instrumental music lessons), it is also available only as a paid extra. Mr Morrow, [philip.morrow@sherborne.org](mailto:philip.morrow@sherborne.org) will be happy to provide further details.

Boys may also pick four options instead of five and use the fifth slot for Learning Support.

\*Please note that space is limited to a maximum of 4x16 places in DT. Spaces are awarded on a first come, first served basis. Taking DT in the Third Form is **NOT** a prerequisite for GCSE, so if we are not able to offer your son a place in one of the DT classes in his first year, he is still able to pick DT as one of his GCSE options.



## Guidance on choosing

We recommend that boys consider three things when deciding whether to pick a subject:

1. Do I enjoy the subject?
2. Am I good at it?
3. How likely am I to study it for GCSE?

Of the three, the first point is the one to emphasise. In general, we find that boys who enjoy what they are doing (which is usually most of them!) tend to work hard, which tends to lead to academic success. Therefore, we encourage your son to choose the things that he thinks he will enjoy the most.

Please replace with: Except for French, it is fine for your son to choose something he has not studied before and this is often the case for Spanish.

Once your son has picked his options, we ask he sticks with them for the duration of the Third Form. Therefore, when making his

choices, your son should keep at the back of his mind the thought that he is making a commitment to continue with these subjects for a year.

By picking a subject in the Third Form, it is important to stress that there is no expectation that your son continues with the subject to GCSE. Equally, not picking a subject in the Third Form does not preclude him from taking the subject for GCSE: it is, for example, fine to pick DT GCSE having not studied the subject in the Third Form. That said, you do need to have studied a language in the Third Form to pick it for GCSE and, in general, it does make for a better (and easier!) learning experience if you start the GCSE course building from a platform of strength in the Third Form. Therefore, we do recommend that your son picks options in the Third Form that reflect likelihood of future study.

We use a blocking system to arrange options such as the one shown in the diagram below. While this is illustrative, it is likely to be similar to the structure in place for your son. If your son's

preferred choices do not fit into the blocking structure below, please let us know and we will endeavour to accommodate his preferences.

| Block 1             | Block 2             | Block 3                                | Block 4                         | Block 5                        |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Computer Science    |                     | Art<br>Computer Science<br>Drama<br>DT | Computer Science<br>Drama<br>DT | Art                            |
| DT                  | DT<br>EAL<br>French |                                        |                                 |                                |
| French<br>Geography | History             | Geography<br>History                   | Geography<br>History<br>Music   | French<br>Geography<br>History |
| Music               | Spanish             |                                        |                                 | Spanish                        |
| Learning Support*   | Learning Support*   | Learning Support*                      | Learning Support*               | Learning Support*              |

*Illustrative purposes only*

\*In most cases, Learning Support replaces a subject option. If you know your son is going to receive LS lessons, it works better to pick one fewer Third Form option so there is space for LS in your son's timetable.

## Deadlines and how to make your selection

Options choices are made online and it will take only a few minutes to submit the survey form. You will receive a link to the form along with the rest of the new boys' material. This is normally sent to parents at the start of the Trinity Term (i.e. April / May) with the request that you make your choices by the **beginning of June**.

When making your choices, you will be asked to choose your preferences in each of the blocks. We may also ask you to indicate a back-up option too. We will do everything we can to ensure that your son receives his first choices though it is sometimes necessary to revert

to back-ups if courses become full. If there is a problem allocating your first choices, we will contact you to discuss alternatives.

Many thanks in advance for making your choices and for keeping to the deadlines. If you have any questions about the options. Please contact the Admissions Department using the email: [admissions@sherborne.org](mailto:admissions@sherborne.org).

Dr Tim Filtress  
Deputy Head (Academic)

## Information about the individual options

### Art

Art at Sherborne gives pupils more than just a creative outlet: it fosters problem solving skills; lateral thinking; complex analysis; critical thinking; and practical making skills. Never before has it been more relevant to be a creative thinker with a high degree of visual literacy – a fact reflected by the explosion of exciting Art-related professions in the modern creative industries. From Architecture to Game Design, and from Engineering to Fashion, the creative individual is in high demand!

The course that Third Form pupils follow introduces a range of opportunities that inspire and challenge. Core skills are established through the work pupils do in exploring artistic, historical and cultural references. Emphasis is placed on communicating ideas visually but also verbally through the use of subject specific language in group critiques. Pupils are also introduced to a variety of learning experiences, which encourage the development of the core skills. This is facilitated by the use of different media, processes, techniques and technologies. Each project through-

out the Third Form course builds the development of practical skills, knowledge and understanding, all of which can be taken forward to support the GCSE course.

In the first term introductory projects in the past have been inspired by the Day of the Dead and the skateboard graffiti artist Beto Janz. Working with printmaking, painting and Photoshop the workshops are underpinned by drawing and colour theory. Boys have also produced outcomes in response to the work of Seguy, exploring the formal elements of shape, form and pattern, leading to the creation of sculptural forms using mod roc, recycled polystyrene and wire. In another project, one that culminated in an exhibition of Third Form work in the Oliver Holt Gallery, was the School's Remembrance Day service, which inspired an interpretation of the work by contemporary British artist Tom Phillips.

Ultimately, every individual can be creative! The Art Department provides the opportunities and creative environment for each boy to develop the skills needed to flourish.



### Computer Science

No other school in the country can offer a Computer Science educational programme that has been inspired by the Old Shirburnian, Alan Turing OBE. As the father of Artificial Intelligence and modern computing, his legacy lives on in the curriculum and the boys that study Computer Science here.

The Department offers boys with content that stimulates problem-solving skills, underpinned by good mathematical ability and the chance to develop skills that are most highly valued society – the idea that the modern world is underpinned by technology and Computing. The course marries together the understanding of computational and algorithmic thinking, decomposition, abstraction and practical programming and problem solving with effective use of AI and other digital tools. We even have our own educational AI platform, Sherbot that helps foster effective and responsible use of AI, thus preparing pupils for a world where this will become, or already is, ubiquitous.

The course teaches practical software engineering skills with Python Programming, elements of Robotics and AI as well as the important digital skills such as Excel and touch-typing. The boys will also study aspects of digital literacy through the Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award and the boys sit competitive programming and algorithmic-thinking competitions such as the Bebras Challenge, the Perse Coding Challenge and the Oxford University Computing Challenge.

The course is supplemented by an array of co-curricular clubs, led by highly qualified departmental staff. We run clubs in Virtual Reality, Coding and Robotics.

The course is designed to help teach pupils to think creatively, digitally, and mathematically but also equip them for the wider digital world, beyond school, to be inquisitive and aim high.





### Design Technology

Design & Technology in the Third Form looks to develop your son's creative confidence and will broaden and deepen his knowledge and understanding when solving creative problems. The subject will help your son to develop transferable skills such as research, planning, prototype manufacture and presentation skills. He will develop both his drawing and ICT skills, using computer-aided design as well as programming to control equipment. He will learn to apply a multitude of machinery and equipment to build and test the three-dimensional solutions he proposes.

The Third Form curriculum builds a strong foundation for GCSE and A level. Boys who study Design & Technology at A level often go on to read Architecture, Engineering

or Product Design at University. Studying Design & Technology in his first year at Sherborne, your son will work both independently and in pairs to solve a variety of design challenges. To assist him in doing so we will build his understanding of materials and manufacturing technology; help him to understand and apply programmable equipment to generate solutions to set problems; and we will also develop his creativity and skills in prototype manufacture. We will help him to communicate his thoughts and decisions by building his confidence in drawing and also his ability to use computer aided design to program machinery and present his ideas. All lessons will combine elements of classroom study with practical application in the workshops and the departmental ICT suite.

## Drama

At Sherborne, we teach Drama in a dynamic and creative way, with plenty of games and exercises to stir the imagination and increase confidence whilst acquiring all-important drama skills. These techniques and abilities are not only useful on stage, but they are also critical in life as well. Being able to empathise, think quickly, take the initiative and speak confidently in public are not only key to drama but also to a successful career.

The Third Form course covers a wide variety of practitioners and subject areas, with the aim of having fun at the same time as creating a sound basis for later development. Boys who join Drama in the Third Form will learn a range of skills in an exciting and fun way. These skills include the following: basic stagecraft; how to improvise spontaneously; how to

devise plays; how to work with puppets; the basics of stage design; and of course, working with script. We tend to use Clive Barker, Keith Johnstone, Augusto Boal, Stanislavski, Kneehigh Theatre Company and Katie Mitchell as our principal practitioners during this foundation year. Boys can expect to see the techniques of these practitioners included in the lessons throughout the year, enriching the learning experience and providing a sound but exciting basis to the work. A typical lesson will include games and exercises, followed by an exploration/development of a specific skill or approach. The course is planned so that these skills provide a basis for study at GCSE, but they will also work just as well as a stand-alone, fun and enjoyable option in the Third Form.



## Geography

Geography is the study of the world around us and this is a central theme of the curriculum at Sherborne, which covers contemporary geographical issues such as Climate Change, Inequality, and Development. The curriculum adopts an integrated approach whereby physical and human geography are interwoven across the three core topics. Geography is a subject for those with an inquisitive mind that want to know more about what shapes the places we live in; how they have changed over time; how they will change in the future; and, what we can do about it. We are global citizens not only occupying an increasingly interconnected world but also shaping it. Geography provides the toolkit to understand this world and to make sense of the changing landscapes – be they natural, cultural, geopolitical, or otherwise. It is a subject that is unique in bridging the gap between natural and social sciences. It encourages one to look out at the world with an inquisitive, analytical, evidence-based and critical mind.

In the Michaelmas term pupils study 'Seven Ways to Save the Planet'. This topic promotes an awareness of global concerns such as replacing oil with renewables, protecting

forests, living sustainably and putting people and the planet before profit. In the Lent term pupils' study 'Africa: A Continent of Connections and Contrasts'. This topic aims to dispel misconceptions about Africa and promote a more advanced understanding of the human and physical variations within this vast continent. Finally, in the Trinity term, pupils study 'Social Inequality in the UK'. This topic aims to promote greater awareness of ones' context in society. The topic casts a spotlight on contemporary challenges in the UK including food poverty, the cost-of-living crisis, and the impacts of Covid-19. The Earthshot Competition runs concurrently with the taught content in the Third Form. This competition is open to all Lower School pupils and provides a wonderful opportunity to engage with geography beyond the classroom.

Through Geography pupils will develop core literacy skills that transfer readily to GCSE, regardless of whether they continue with the subject; whilst also learning about contemporary issues such as climate change, poverty and globalisation that will not only shape the world you live in but also that of those that follow you.





### History

The History department offer a vibrant and diverse curriculum in the Third Form, which makes the most of our flexibility being outside of the National Curriculum whilst forming an excellent foundation of skills for the iGCSE.

We kick off in Michaelmas term with a breadth study on revolutions (France, Russia and China) before moving to a depth study on World War One. After Christmas we look at the Age of Exploration, which leads to a source investigation on the transatlantic slave trade and plantation slavery. The final term starts with a thematic investigation on Empires, taking in the Ottomans, the Mongols and the Qin Dynasty.

Lessons typically involve a range of visual and media resources, plenty of participation and movement, and learning happens through debate, investigation and collaboration. The Department also make use of the wider learning environment, chief amongst which is the historic

buildings of the school and the town, and the outstanding school archives. In addition, we utilise the library for the end of year Renaissance unit, where boys set themselves an area of investigation for independent research, presenting their projects and artefacts to the rest of the school as a library exhibition.

Beyond this, we make the most of any opportunity to take learning History outside of the school, running trips to the Chalke Valley History Festival and, when possible, battlefields trips to Belgium or day trips to relevant museums in the south west region. History is a naturally cross-curricular subject, which not only provides excellent support for literacy, but overlaps with the skills and ideas covered in other humanities and social science subjects.

It is traditionally a very popular iGCSE option where boys achieve exceptionally well in addition to finding the content both engaging and enjoyable.



### Modern Foreign Languages

The importance of learning languages in the modern world cannot be emphasised enough. Through the study of languages, pupils gain deeper global cultural understanding and enhanced communication skills, not just in foreign languages but also in their mother tongue. Pupils who leave school with a good level of language learning have a distinct edge in the employment world and opportunities for travel and study abroad.

The MFL Department prides itself on the provision of languages, both on-and-off the curriculum. We currently have boys in the school studying French, German, Spanish, Mandarin, Italian, Russian and Japanese. Upon entry to the Third Form, pupils have a free choice of whether they wish to continue studying a language. The great majority do and many go on to study two languages for GCSE. Equally, boys have a choice over which language/s they wish to learn. In choosing which language/s to opt for, we advise pupils to think about what they most enjoy. For some, learning

two new languages is exciting and a fresh start; for others, the opportunity to develop mastery of a language already begun at prep school is a consideration.

French is offered to any pupil who has studied the language previously whereas Spanish is available to all pupils at beginner level. Boys who join the Third Form with prior knowledge of these languages are catered for with extension tasks or 1:1 support from our language assistants. Pupils with English as a second language can opt for EAL. The EAL teacher will assess their English work and advise accordingly. A few boys also choose to study Mandarin, which is available (as a paid extra) to pupils with a background in the language or a strong motivation for study. Pupils interested in this option are asked to discuss it with the Head of MFL, Mr Morrow, [philip.morrow@sherborne.org](mailto:philip.morrow@sherborne.org) who will make arrangements for tuition.

## Music

Opting for Music as a classroom subject is complemented by playing a musical instrument, but being a performing musician (for which there are countless opportunities at Sherborne) is not a necessity, nor is music theory.

The course focuses on developing skills through composing and/or sound sampling, using Apple computers with Logic Pro X software (an extension of GarageBand) and/or Sibelius notation software.

Imagination, creativity, and a love of music, whether classical, jazz, rock, or pop are essential, with the

Logic Pro X software enabling those who cannot read music to work alongside those who read fluently. Throughout the academic year, the curriculum focuses on blending music theory and practical skills with an emphasis on music technology. Projects include film and TV music, Jazz and Blues, songwriting, and Indian music.

Many go on to take GCSE Music, with its large emphasis on composition, but this is not a foregone conclusion and need not influence the choice of the subject at Third Form level.





# SHERBORNE BOYS

**Sherborne Boys**  
Abbey Road  
Sherborne  
Dorset DT9 3LF  
United Kingdom

[admissions@sherborneboys.group](mailto:admissions@sherborneboys.group)  
+44 (0)1935 810 403

**[sherborneboys.group](https://www.sherborneboys.group)**

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