

YEAR 9 OPTIONS 2026



CARDINAL HEENAN
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Heateachers'

WELCOME

At the heart of our mission at Cardinal Heenan is the desire to inspire excellence by encouraging every individual to be the person that God calls them to be, in preparation for this life and the life to come. Education is here to prepare you for the rest of your life; providing you with opportunities to learn about yourself, discover the world around you and form a lasting, personal relationship with God. As you progress through your journey towards adulthood, you will know more about yourself and what is important to you. This means that you are increasingly able to take decisions about the appropriate direction for you and your education.

At this point in Year 8 we invite you to start this journey by selecting the options subjects that you want to pursue in Year 9 and beyond. This is an exciting and important opportunity for you to think about your future and take your first independent steps on the path to achieving this.



This booklet contains information about our Year 9 Curriculum. Our intention is to help you understand how Year 9 builds on the foundations that you set in years 7 and 8, and how it will prepare you to undertake your GCSE and vocational courses in years 10 and 11.

Mr D Kelly
Headteacher

*"Education is a passport to the future,
for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today"*
Malcom X

Our CURRICULUM

In Years 7 and 8 you have studied the foundations of a wide range of different subjects.

RE	Art	Drama	English	Geography	History	ICT	Maths	Music	PE	PSHCE	Science	Spanish	Technology
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Our Year 9 Curriculum

At Cardinal Heenan we believe it is important that you have a strong grounding in the key subjects that allow you to understand and engage with the world around you, allowing you to become an informed citizen and contribute fully to your community. As such, as you move into Year 9 you will keep a broad core of foundational subjects. To complement this you will study two options subjects, which will allow you to explore new subjects that you have not previously studied and focus further on the subjects that you have found a particular affinity with.

RE	English	Geography	History	Maths	Science	Spanish	PE	Option 1	Option 2
							PSHCE		
							Study Skills		

Your two Year 9 options subjects will enable you to:

- Deepen your understanding of a subject that you have found a pleasure for;
- Explore a subject that you have never studied before; and
- Understand different progressional pathways, including which is right for you.

Our Key Stage Four (Years 10 and 11) Curriculum

As you move into Year 10, you will refine your curriculum to focus on the subjects that you will pursue for the rest of your time at Cardinal Heenan.

RE	English Language & Literature	Maths	Science Dual or Triple	PE	PSHCE	Study Skills	Geography	Option 2	Option 3
							History		
							Spanish		
							French		

We offer a larger range of courses in years 10 and 11. This is because many of our Year 9 courses are designed to provide the foundational skills and knowledge for multiple Year 10 and 11 courses, thereby enabling you to better understand which assessed course is the right one for you. Further information on progression routes is included within the subject pages of this booklet.

Courses are offered subject to sufficient student interest and staffing capacity. To support this process, students are asked to make five carefully considered choices. Should a course be unable to run, we will work closely with students to ensure a suitable alternative is selected.



OPTION COLUMNS

When you come to selecting your option choices, you will need to select one option from each column. We also ask for a reserve option for each column just in case your first choice is over-subscribed.

Most subjects are available in more than one column but, for timetabling reasons, a small handful are only available in one column.

Option A	Option B
Art	Art
Business	Business
Computer Studies	Computer Studies
Design	Design
Food	Food
Health and Social Care	Health and Social Care
Sport	Sport
Drama	Music
-	French

My Option A Choice.....

My Option B Choice.....

My Option A Reserve Choice:.....

My Option B Reserve Choice:.....

Our CORE SUBJECTS



Religious Education

At the heart of our curriculum is Religious Education. This allows you to explore your own faith, developing an understanding of the person of Jesus Christ. We are committed to supporting you at whatever stage you are on your faith journey. We encourage awareness and appreciation of the your own worth and that of others, including the beliefs and rights of other people. You will also learn about other religious traditions, experiences and personal beliefs.



English

Our English curriculum is a 'narrative over time', where we seek to build knowledge of what is being told alongside how it is told. We will teach you to read as a writer, and write as readers. Literature is a way of understanding human nature and the society of a particular time and place. We seek to delve into that rich history including through the study of great texts including 'Romeo and Juliet' (Shakespeare) and 'Animal Farm' (Orwell).



Mathematics

Mathematics is a set of principles which underpins scientific thought. You will develop a toolkit to solve real world problems in diverse areas such as Science, Technology and Geography. Moreover, you will acquire a logical approach to problem solving. We believe that the answer is not the goal; what matters most is the process. To this end, our lessons are characterised by an emphasis on fluency, reasoning and problem solving



Science

Science enables you to understand the world around you. Science is a practical subject, which is reflected in the way that you will learn; through combination of theory and practical. You will develop the foundational knowledge Biology, Chemistry and Physics with a specialist teacher in each subject. You will also develop an understanding of the scientific method. This will help you accurately to investigate and evaluate the efficacy of the methods used by others.

Choosing subjects is an important milestone for both students and parents. The options selected at this stage help to shape your future pathways, keeping doors open for further study, training and a wide range of careers. At our school, we believe every student should be supported to aspire to ambitious goals, belong to a broad and balanced curriculum. We want you to achieve your full potential.

In Year 9, you will continue to study subjects that have a strong grounding that will allow you to understand and engage with the world around you. You will continue to study:

- English
- Science
- A humanity (Geography or History)
- Mathematics
- A language

When you move into Year 10, you will refine your curriculum further, keeping a balanced base for your progression to sixth form, college or an apprenticeship.



Spanish

We live in a global world that is interconnected and interdependent. The ability to communicate in a second language will open innumerable possibilities to you, allowing you to engage in a more immediate and meaningful way with people around the world. This might be living, working or studying abroad, foreign travel or communicating with friends and neighbours.



Geography

Geography will help you develop the skills needed to understand the social, economic and environmental issues that the world faces. You will learn about our changing, exciting and diverse world through a balanced framework of physical and human geography, examining the relationships and conflicts between the man-made and natural worlds. This will allow you to think like a Geographer, understanding the interplay between the natural and manmade.



History

Knowing about the past means you can make sense of the present. Through studying History you will explore events of the past and understand how they have formed the way we live today. You will also develop transferable skills including the ability to evaluate, analyse, question, interpret, and communicate in a clear and concise manner, to read a text and understand its bias. We will study every question from as many different angles and points of view as possible.

Our WELLBEING

At Cardinal Heenan, we offer a truly holistic experience. In addition to the taught curriculum, we provide a wider curriculum designed to enhance, complement and support your studies.

PSHCE

Our Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) programme gives you the knowledge, understanding, and practical skills to live safe, healthy, and productive lives. You will develop an understanding of:

- How to maintain positive mental and physical health;
- Relationships. You will develop an understanding of how to form and maintain positive relationships; and
- Living in the wider world. Topics also include those linked to personal finance and careers, such as, spending, saving, borrowing, debt, insurance, student finance and future planning.

Core Physical Education

The physical and mental health benefits of sport and exercise are widely known. Through physical education lessons you will develop your flexibility, build your strength and stamina whilst developing the self-confidence to enjoy sporting activities and exercise. A wide range of physical activities are available, some of which include athletics, badminton, basketball, cricket, football, netball, rounders, table tennis, handball and Gaelic football.

Study Skills

Our Study Skills programme is an innovative course that helps you understand how to learn and develop your skills to be a successful student. It complements your learning across the curriculum, providing you with the opportunity to reflect on, and improve, your own learning, as well as supporting you to develop a healthy balance between your studies and other activities. In addition you will continue to develop your IT skills during the programme.



ART

Progress on to:

- ART AND DESIGN GCSE
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COURSE OVERVIEW

The Year 9 Art course is designed to give you experience of all Art mediums. During the year you will get to use and experiment with a range of 2D and 3D media, to produce a painting or sculptural piece based on the theme of "Still life." As well as the practical side of the course there is also some theory work. Here you will investigate works of art by Pop artists as well as artists and designers of your own choosing. As the year progresses you will have a more independent approach and be able to choose the direction your work goes bringing your own ideas into it.

This course is suitable for anyone with an interest in the creative arts and wishes to develop their artistic and critical thinking skills. There's plenty of opportunities for hands on learning and to use your own creative ideas.

KEY STAGE FOUR COURSES

GCSE Art and Design

Our Year 9 Art course is designed to give you the skills and approach required for a GCSE in Art and Design. If you choose to go on to study this, you will complete in-depth studies of a range of artists, craftspeople and cultures. This is designed to inspire you to explore and develop your own artistic style.

In years 10 and 11, we look specifically at various methods of depicting the natural world, as well as exploring your interests, hobbies and environment through the My World topic.

Curriculum Leader

Mrs S Atkinson
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BUSINESS

Progress on to:

- BUSINESS STUDIES GCSE
- ENTERPRISE AND MARKETING CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL



COURSE OVERVIEW

Do you want to know about the dynamic nature of Business and how people make their millions?

Our Year 9 Business course will equip you with a sound understanding of the basics of running a business and the important real-life skills of personal finance.

Topics include: how businesses recruit people,, market research; the economy; branding; and personal finance.

This course is suitable for all students who enjoy being creative, have an interest in current affairs and want to learn real life skills that are essential to developing as well-rounded individuals.

KEY STAGE FOUR COURSES

GCSE Business Studies

In this course, learners will understand how an organisation works collectively from enterprise and entrepreneurship, marketing and market research, finance and accounting, human resources and also operations management.

Cambridge National in Enterprise and Marketing

This course covers a range of theory and practical elements which form enterprise and marketing concepts including designing a business proposal to market and pitch a business proposal.

Curriculum Leader

Miss C McGrellis
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COMPUTER STUDIES

Progress on to:

- COMPUTER SCIENCE GCSE
- CREATIVE I-MEDIA CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL



COURSE OVERVIEW

In Year 9 you will study a range of computer skills that are used in modern day life including creative content and computational sciences. This course combines the logical and challenging aspects of Computer Science and the creative and inspiring side of Creative iMedia. With topics ranging from image and video editing, programming, networks computer games design and also modern day issues such as cyber security and internet fraud, hacking and social media.

In this course we focus on preparing you to work in project-based environments developing your organisational skills and resilience whilst learning on software used in the industry today. This course is suited for people that hunger for challenge, adapt to new technology well, are keen to develop their understanding of the computing world. This course is suited to both people who are methodical and logical but also to expressive and creative.

KEY STAGE FOUR COURSES

GCSE Computer Science*

This course focuses on the problem solving and analytical side of the computer studies course. We look at how computers work and communicate with each other and how programs within the computer are made, learning the fundamentals of algorithms and programming techniques.

Creative iMedia Cambridge National

This course focuses on the creative and design aspects of our computer studies course. We dive into the world of creative design through computer-aided-software including image manipulation, comic book design, animation, video editing, and interactive multimedia software.

Curriculum Leader

Mr E Hartwell
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* In the case of Computer Science being oversubscribed in Year 10, we will take Year 9 into consideration along with your Maths grade.

DESIGN

Progress on to:

- CONSTRUCTION THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT LEVEL 1/2 AWARD
- DESIGN TECHNOLOGY GCSE



COURSE OVERVIEW

The Year 9 Design course is a diverse creative option which blends together elements of design, research, development, planning and theory with the practical aspects of realisation and manufacture. During the course of Year 9, you will learn about conveying your ideas, developing ideas, following manufacturing plans, elements of building, and how the designing of products meshes with the designing of buildings, which will feed your understanding how these two elements of design drive forward the creative and building industries. You will also have the opportunity to develop your understanding of a variety of practical skills and CAD/CAM skills.

This course is suitable for all students who are interested in being creative, exploring and developing ideas to make them as unique and innovative as possible, and those who want to look at the world in a different light.

KEY STAGE FOUR COURSES

Construction the Built Environment

This is a Level 1/2 Vocational Award, which focuses on practical skills, health and safety knowledge and developing/planning/costing skills, can lead into a range of trades such as plumbing, electrical, stone and brick laying and many more.

GCSE Design and Technology

This course focuses on the design process as well as an array of knowledge to help underpin your design work. It can lead into careers such as product design, graphic design (including digital, web and user interface), interior design, engineering and architecture.

Curriculum Leader

Mr M Richmond
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DRAMA

Progress on to:

- DRAMA GCSE



COURSE OVERVIEW

Throughout history, human beings have had the need to tell stories. Storytelling is as old as the human race. What started as telling tales soon turned into standing up and acting them out. The world's oldest theatre, in Epidaurus, Greece, is over two thousand years old. Theatre has a unique staying power and a universal appeal. It exists in every culture of the world.

Our Year 9 Drama course offers you the ability to explore and understand the art of theatre. Practical exploration is central to Year 9 Drama. You will have the opportunity to study some of the great theatre practitioners to ensure a thorough knowledge of the history of theatre and developments within it. You will study the style, genre and theatrical conventions from different theatre practitioners' perspectives. This will include looking at drama as a whole, devising and performing your own piece of drama, as well as performing extracts from a play.

KEY STAGE FOUR COURSES

GCSE Drama

If you take GCSE Drama you will learn to devise your own piece of theatre, perform extracts from a script and watch live theatre. You will learn about a range of techniques used by theatre practitioners such as Brecht, Stanislavski, Frantic Assembly, Complicite and Alecky Blythe. You will undertake an indepth study of the play 'Blood Brothers' by Willy Russell.

Drama students emerge with a toolkit of transferable skills, including confidence, communication skills, empathy, creativity, team work, problem solving, resilience, to name but a few.

Curriculum Leader

Miss H McMinn

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FOOD

Progress on to:

- **FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION GCSE**



COURSE OVERVIEW

The Year 9 Food course is focused on developing practical cooking skills, health and safety competence as well as a baseline understanding of nutritional theory.

The course is built around the five principles of food preparation: food, nutrition and health; food science; food safety; food choice and food provenance.

The overall aim of the course is to develop high-quality cooking skills and a sound knowledge of food science and human nutritional needs.

Students will cook regularly and will be required to provide their own ingredients at least once every two weeks.

KEY STAGE FOUR COURSES

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

This course further builds on the science and nutrition elements of food and will require learners to continue to develop their cooking skills but will have a greater emphasis on the theoretical underpinnings related to nutrition.

There are a range of careers that can be followed after studying food at different levels. These include: nutritional therapist; food technologist; food stylist; retailer; catering; dietician; agricultural scientist; food microbiologist; chef; sports scientist; sensory scientist and many more.

Curriculum Leader

Mr M Richmond
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FRENCH

Progress on to:

- **FRENCH GCSE**

Please note you must take French in Year 9 in order to progress onto GCSE French in Year 10.



COURSE OVERVIEW

French is a beautiful, romance language that is closely related to Spanish. Spoken by over 320 million speakers worldwide. As we live in an ever more multicultural society, language skills provide learners with an opportunity to live and work wherever they choose.

During the Year 9 course you will develop your use of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation skills in the studying a variety of different themes, relevant to your current and future study.

You will study phonics, vocabulary and grammar that will develop a firm foundation for further study. Furthermore, you will develop an awareness of French culture by drawing similarities and differences from their own traditions and cultures.

KEY STAGE FOUR COURSES

GCSE French

In years 10 and 11 we continue to build on the foundations of phonics, vocabulary and grammar across the themes of: My Personal World; Lifestyle and Wellbeing; My Neighbourhood; Media and Technology; Studying and My Future; and Travel and Tourism.

You will learn to express their opinions, communicate in a variety of tenses and use sophisticated phrases whilst exploring these themes. With the aim of developing in spontaneity and fluency, you will be taught how to manipulate the language to become effective communicators.

Curriculum Leader

Mrs H Stanton
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HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Progress on to:

- HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL



COURSE OVERVIEW

Our Year 9 Health and Social Care course will develop your understanding of the various different roles within the health and social care system.

You will experience the science and medical areas of social care, such as, first aid, nutrition and the body systems.

You will also build knowledge and understanding of appropriate care when focusing on supporting individual rights and communication.

Finally, you will develop knowledge of key milestones in early years and how creative activities are used to stimulate our physical, social and intellectual skills at different life stages.

KEY STAGE FOUR COURSES

Cambridge National in Health and Social Care

If you choose to pursue Health and Social Care in years 10 and 11 you will learn about:

- Principles of care in health and social care settings;
- Supporting individuals through life events; and
- Health promotion campaigns.

Careers in Health and Social Care can be deeply fulfilling, offering opportunities to make a real difference to the lives and welfare of other people. Health and social care roles account for nearly one in ten of all paid jobs in the UK, and demand is likely to rise.

Curriculum Leader

Mr J Wynne
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MUSIC

Progress on to:

- MUSIC GCSE



COURSE OVERVIEW

What would the world be like without music? It is hard to imagine such a thing. The truth is that we all love music for many different reasons and the value of musical experience is many sided.

Through our Year 9 Music course you will:

- develop an appreciation, enjoyment and understanding of a wide range of music;
- build your skills of composition;
- develop your instrumental and/or vocal performance skills;
- explore a wide range of musical styles and traditions; and
- improvise and compose and explore a range of notations.

You will learn through a combination of rehearsal and performance, listening and music analysis, research and practical music making — both as an individual and an ensemble.

KEY STAGE FOUR COURSES

GCSE Music

GCSE Music encourages an integrated approach to the three distinct disciplines of performing, composing and appraising.

You will develop knowledge and understanding of music through the study of a variety of genres and styles in a wider context.

*'Music gives a soul to the universe,
wings to the mind, flight to the
imagination and life to everything'*
Plato

Curriculum Leader

Miss A Thomas
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SPORT

Progress on to:

- PHYSICAL EDUCATION GCSE
- SPORT STUDIES CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL



COURSE OVERVIEW

The Year 9 Sport option will develop your knowledge and understanding of some core sport and physical education themes.

You will learn about the relationship between media and sport, the body systems and the principles of training.

You will also develop an appreciation of the importance of sport and physical activity in our daily lives by evaluating current trends in socio-cultural issues and sports participation, leading to an understanding of how the sports industry is shaped.

Lessons are a combination of theory and practical, enabling you to develop your skills and performance across a range of individual and team sports.

KEY STAGE FOUR COURSES

GCSE Physical Education

In GCSE Physical Education you will learn about physical factors affecting performance. You will develop an understanding of the skeletal, muscular, respiratory and cardiovascular systems and the impact diet and training have upon the body's ability to perform.

Sport Studies Cambridge National

In Sport Studies Cambridge National you will learn about

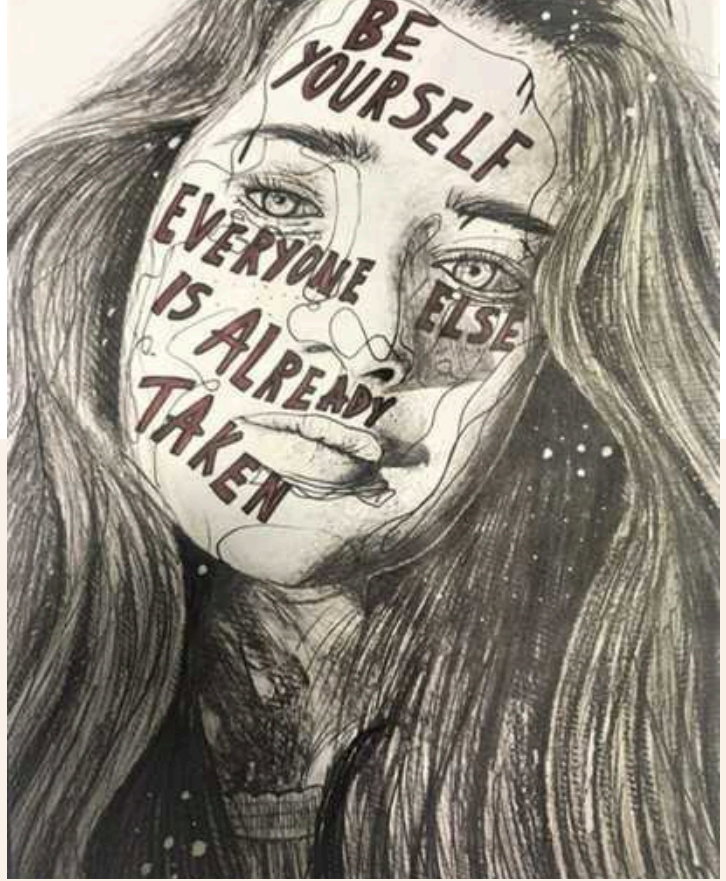
- Contemporary issues in sport;
- Performance and leadership in sports activities; and
- Sport and the media.

Curriculum Leader

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CURRICULUM SUPPORT



OUR CURRICULUM SUPPORT TEAM SUPPORTS STUDENTS WHO HAVE ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS, INCLUDING THOSE WITH EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS. LED BY OUR SENDCO, MRS POWELL-WIFFEN, THE CURRICULUM SUPPORT TEAM WORKS WITH STUDENTS TO HELP THEM DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A RANGE OF SKILLS TO ENSURE THEIR SUCCESS.

We take a flexible approach to meeting individual needs of students. Some of the strategies we take include:

- Supporting students in lessons;
- Additional literacy and numeracy intervention;
- Helping students develop their study skills including how to organise and prioritise their homework and coursework tasks; and
- Social and emotional development work groups.

Personal Growth and Wellbeing

Personal Growth and Wellbeing (PGW) provides students with essential life skills for more successful futures. The course is designed to promote valuable skills to help students lead happier, healthier and more successful lives.

The PGW resources create engaging conversations about life's big issues and help learners to gain a better knowledge of themselves and the world around them.

If you have additional questions, please speak to our SENDCo
Mrs Powell-Wiffen
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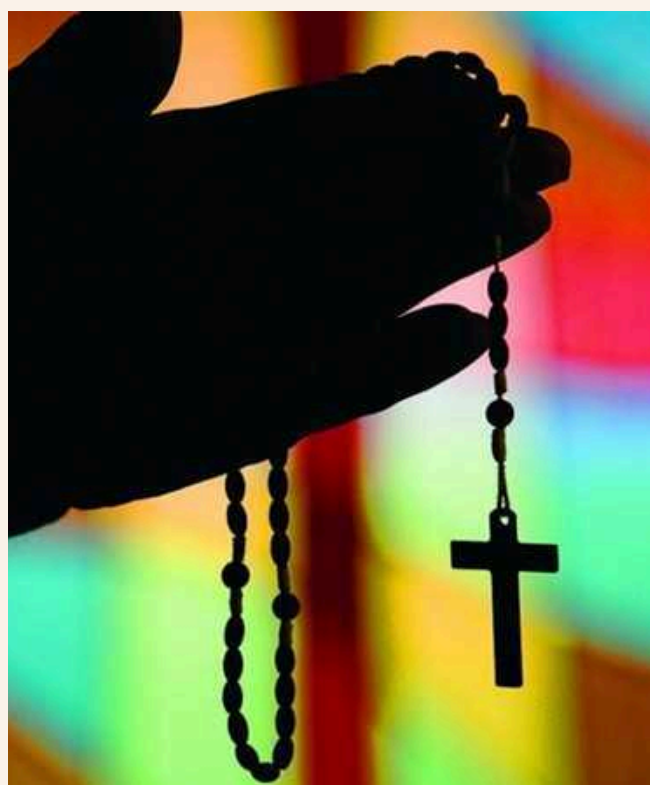
Our WIDER CURRICULUM

Catholic Life and Mission

At Cardinal Heenan we aim to nourish you spiritually through a deep awareness and sense of Gospel values and understanding of the Roman Catholic faith. You will have the opportunity to live the liturgical life of the Church through attending Holy Mass and daily acts of collective worship.

We run the 'Faith in Action' award which is nationally recognised by the Church which enhances the work undertaken by the student chaplaincy group and focuses on outreach work within our local community.

You will have the opportunity to engage in the mission of the Church by attending pilgrimages to develop an understanding of what it means to be in the service of others alongside retreats which also offer the opportunity to reflect and pray outside of everyday school life.



Extra-Curricular Opportunities

We run an extensive and highly varied extra-curricular programme, ranging from competitive sports to jazz band, from debating to art club, from Faith in Action and the Duke of Edinburgh Award to the Shakespeare Society.

Extra-curricular activities develop your character, foster friendships, provide leadership opportunities and give a deep sense of personal fulfilment. They make your school experience truly holistic. Furthermore, colleges, universities and employers are increasingly looking for well-rounded, balanced candidates and participating in extra-curricular activities gives you the opportunity to develop these skills in an enjoyable and enriching environment.

Your NEXT STEPS

How many options subjects will I study?

In addition to the core curriculum, you can choose two additional subjects.

Will I definitely get to study my top two choices?

On your options choices form you will be asked to select your first choice and reserve for each column. We use this to design a timetable that enables as many students as possible to study their preferred subjects. This means that it may not be possible for you to study your top two subjects, and it is important that you consider all of your choices carefully.

How do I complete my options form?

Your parents/carers will be emailed an electronic options form on Friday 13 February 2026. You should complete this with them and submit it no later than **Friday 6 March 2026**.



How do I decide what is right for me?

There are many different reasons that you might choose to study a subject; it is an equally valid decision to pursue a subject because you love it as to pursue an alternative that leads to a particular career. The most important thing is that you research your options carefully.

You can do this by:

- watching the videos on our school website;
- speaking to your subject teachers about their course(s);
- discussing your choices with your parents/carers and your form tutor, including thinking about your next steps; and
- talking to students who are already studying the subject – you will get a chance to do this at the Options Fair on Thursday 12 February 2026.



Contact Us

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