

Curriculum Overview 2026-27

At Keswick School we aim to provide a broad, balanced and personalised curriculum which will engage, inspire and challenge all our students. Copies of our curriculum maps which provide an overview of the curriculum content for each subject in Years 7-13 can be found at <https://www.keswick.cumbria.sch.uk/curriculum/curriculummaps>

Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)

At Key Stage 3, students study a broad range of subjects which not only prepares them for their examination courses to come but also develops their skills as a learner and as a young person.

During Key stage 3 students study:

- English
- Mathematics
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Biology
- French
- German
- History
- Geography
- Religion, philosophy and ethics (RPE)
- Computing
- Design Technology (including food and textiles)
- Art
- Drama
- Music
- Personal Development
- PE/games.

Year 7

In Year 7, students study both French and German. The majority continue with both languages when they enter Year 8. Later in Year 8, they choose one to specialise in for Year 9 and for GCSE study in KS4. A very small number of students will continue with the study of only either French or German in Year 8 & 9 and take an Enquiry Based Learning course in Year 8.

Subject	No of lessons (hours per fortnight)	% Curriculum time	
English	6	12%	
Accelerated Reading	2	4%	
Mathematics	6	12%	
Physics	2	4%	12%
Chemistry	2	4%	
Biology	2	4%	
MfL (French and German)	6	12%	
History	2	4%	
Geography	2	4%	
Religion, Philosophy and Ethics	2	4%	
Computing	2	4%	
Design Technology (food, textiles, resistant materials, graphic products, electronics)	4	8%	
Art	2	4%	
Music	2	4%	
Drama	2	4%	
Physical Education/games	4	8%	
Personal Development	2	4%	
	Total: 50		

The extended school curriculum also gives KS3 students extra opportunities to extend their learning (see below)

Year 8

In Year 8 most students study both French and German and later in Year 8 will choose one to specialise in for Year 9 and for GCSE study in KS4. A small number of students will continue with the study of only either French or German in Year 8 and 9 and take an Enquiry Based Learning course in Year 8.

Subject	No of lessons (hours per fortnight)	% Curriculum time	
English	6	12%	
Mathematics	6	12%	
Physics	2	4%	12%
Chemistry	2	4%	
Biology	2	4%	
French (or EBL*)	4	8%	
German (or EBL*)	4	8%	
History	2	4%	
Geography	2	4%	
Religion, Philosophy and Ethics	2	4%	
Computing	2	4%	
Design Technology (food, textiles, resistant materials, graphic products, electronics)	4	8%	
Art	2	4%	
Music	2	4%	
Drama	2	4%	
Physical Education/games	4	8%	
Personal Development	2	4%	
	Total: 50		

The extended school curriculum also gives KS3 students extra opportunities to extend their learning (see below).

Year 9

Students choose French *or* German to continue to study in Year 9. This allows them to specialise in one modern foreign language in Year 9 for a more immersive experience in line with guidelines from The British Council. However, those students who wish to continue

with both languages can choose to study French in the school day and attend the extended curriculum (after school) class in German.

Subject	No of lessons (hours per fortnight)	% Curriculum time	
English	6	12%	
Mathematics	6	12%	
Physics	2	4%	12%
Chemistry	2	4%	
Biology	2	4%	
French OR German	6	12%	
History	3	6%	
Geography	3	6%	
Religion, Philosophy and Ethics	2	4%	
Computing	2	4%	
Design Technology (food, textiles, resistant materials, graphic products, electronics)	4	8%	
Art	2	4%	
Music	2	4%	
Drama	2	4%	
Physical Education/games	4	8%	
Personal Development	2	4%	
	Total: 50		

The extended school curriculum also gives KS3 students extra opportunities to extend their learning (see below)

KS4 (from Sept 2026)

KS4 students study a broad range of subjects leading to Level 2 qualifications at the end of a two-year course. There are also options for students to study vocational courses.

All students follow a core curriculum comprised of:

- English Language (5 hours a fortnight)
- English Literature (5 hours a fortnight)
- Mathematics (7 hours a fortnight)
- 3 separate GCSEs in biology, chemistry and physics (14 hours per fortnight).
- Games: non-examined (2 hours a fortnight)
- Personal Development, non-examined, including: health, relationships/sexual education, careers, personal finance and religious studies (2 hours a fortnight)

Students are placed on one of two aspirational pathways, **the green pathway** or the **blue pathway**.

Like most schools nationally, we place students on broad pathways according to their current performance to ensure they are challenged but also able to cope with the demands of GCSE/vocational courses.

Green pathway

Students study:

English Language and Literature, mathematics, separate sciences (biology, chemistry, physics). Students are ***strongly advised*** to study a series of qualifications that include a humanity subject (Geography or History) and a modern foreign language (French or German) plus one other subject.

Some higher educational establishments, apprenticeship schemes or employers may look favourably on students who have achieved all these qualifications and as such whilst we encourage individual choice, we are determined to ensure that our students are making choices that are future proofed, therefore we offer this additional guidance.

Blue pathway

Students study:

English Language and Literature, mathematics, separate sciences (biology, chemistry, physics). Students are ***strongly advised*** to study a series of qualifications that include a humanity subject (Geography or History), plus two other subjects. Some blue pathway students may choose to study a modern foreign language.

For a small number of students there will be additional support and guidance, as it may not be appropriate for them to study for a full selection of courses on offer. We will work with those students and families directly to ensure that there is an appropriate curriculum in place for September 2026.

Students can choose their options from these subjects: geography; history; French; German; philosophy and ethics; computer science; design technology: materials; design technology: fashion and textiles; business studies; music; art and design; drama; and physical education.

We also offer the following vocational courses: WJEC (Eduqas) Hospitality and Catering and OCR Cambridge National Level 1/2 Certificate in Creative iMedia.

Non-core subjects each receive 5 hours of lessons per fortnight.

The extended school curriculum also gives KS4 students extra opportunities to extend their learning (see below)

We offer a wide choice of options and students work with staff, including the Head of Careers and an Inspira careers advisor to identify courses which will support their career aspirations and offer them the best opportunities for success as individuals. Careers education and guidance forms part of the personal development programme for students from Years 7 – 11 and includes talks, videos and visiting speakers. Individual appointments and parents' evenings provide support at each transition point. Additionally, Year 10 students undertake a week of work experience during the summer term.

Key Stage 5 (from Sept 2026)

Keswick School Sixth Form offers an equally eclectic collection of courses to satisfy each students' needs, ranging from traditional subjects to new, exciting opportunities available for the first time in Key Stage 5.

Keswick School's Sixth Form offers courses that lead students on to the next stage of education post 16 to enable them to:

- study advanced level courses and go on to university or college in two years' time;
- to study advanced level courses and look for employment when they are 18+

Following advanced level courses, the great majority of them go on to higher education. Students meeting the entry requirements take 3 A levels, and we see the EPQ as a way of giving our students an extra edge in their applications. A small number of students may take 4 advanced level courses: this will be allowed only at the discretion of the Head of Sixth Form, and they usually need to achieve grade 7 or higher at GCSE level in at least 3 of the 4 subjects to be studied.

Advanced Level Courses

These subjects are two-year courses, being completed at the end of Year 13. They each have their own subject entry criteria which can be found on the Sixth Form section of the school website.

Art, Craft and Design

Biology

Business Studies

Chemistry

Computer Science

Design Technology: Product Design

English Language

English Literature

French

Further Mathematics

Geography

German

History

Mathematics

Media Studies

Music or Music Technology (only one will run each year dependent on interests of the cohort)

Physical Education

Physics

Politics

Psychology

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

Sociology

Vocational Level 3 Subjects

Digital Media Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate

Performing Arts Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate

Vocational Business Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate

Enrichment Level 3 (equivalent to Advanced Subsidiary Level)

AQA Level 3 Mathematical Studies (Core Maths): one year course

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

The EPQ is a qualification equivalent to half a full A Level. During Year 12, students are required to study a one period a week course in EPQ preparation. Students then submit a proposal for a project of their own which might well be informed by their subjects or be a complementary study. This qualification will be completed in Year 12.

The Extended School Curriculum

We believe in providing additional opportunities for students to study courses they may be interested in but which are not run as part of the main curriculum. Parents pay a small fee for these courses to cover staff costs but they are provided free of charge for students eligible for Pupil Premium funding. Some courses have more than one group running in each academic year. The offer varies from year to year but has more recently included:

- Year 9 French (for dual linguists – see above)
- Year 9 German (for dual linguists – see above)
- Cambridge Beginners Latin – KS3 & 4 students
- GCSE Latin – KS3 & 4 students

- Beginners Spanish
- GCSE Further Maths – Year 11 students

We have also previously run extended school courses in GCSE Astronomy, GCSE Dance, AS Level Creative Writing, AS Level German, and AS Level Computer Science.