

Why is Information Technology Important?

Computers are ubiquitous and it is increasingly important to know not just what we can do with them but how they work, so that we can use them more effectively. There is now so much information flowing around us that knowing how to avoid overload, and how to manage the information we need, is an essential skill for the century.

William Howard School is a Microsoft IT Academy and is looking to extend the opportunity to study for ICT qualification beyond students to families of students at the school over the coming school year: watch out for leaflets at publicity events.



The Department

The Computing and ICT Department is part of the Science and Technology Learning Zone. All of the teachers teach Key Stage 3 Computing, and Key Stage 4 ICT. Two teach ICT at Key Stage 5, and one teaches GCSE Computer Science. Every computer suite has sufficient workstations for students to work without being required to share (though shared work is sometimes the way we study) and interactive boards and projectors, with speakers. There is also additional software and hardware that supports the study of computer science specifically.

Key Stage 3

The new Computing Curriculum covers important introductory skills such as sequencing, instruction design and a basic user-friendly introduction to programming. Year 9 students have the opportunity to study physical computing, using breadboards, to provide a wider base of skill and knowledge about the use of computer kit to help them with their future studies regardless of whether they study ICT or Computing.

Key Stage 4

Students can choose from study of a vocational ICT skills course which carries full GCSE equivalence as well as studying the more traditional GCSE Computer Science. The current vocational qualification is comprised of half coursework and half practical examination and includes skills such as Web design and animation. The traditional Computer Science GCSE is assessed primarily through examination (two written papers) with 20% coded coursework.

Key Stage 5

Students can choose from study of a vocational ICT skills course which carries full A Level equivalence and, depending on interest levels the more traditional A Level Computer Science. Both qualifications build on the experiences of students in Key Stage 4, and having studied those courses is an advantage. The current vocational qualification is half coursework and half examination (one project, and one examination in each of Year 12 and Year 13). The traditional Computer Science AS Level is assessed through two written exams, and the A Level is assessed primarily through examination (two written papers) with 20% coded coursework.