

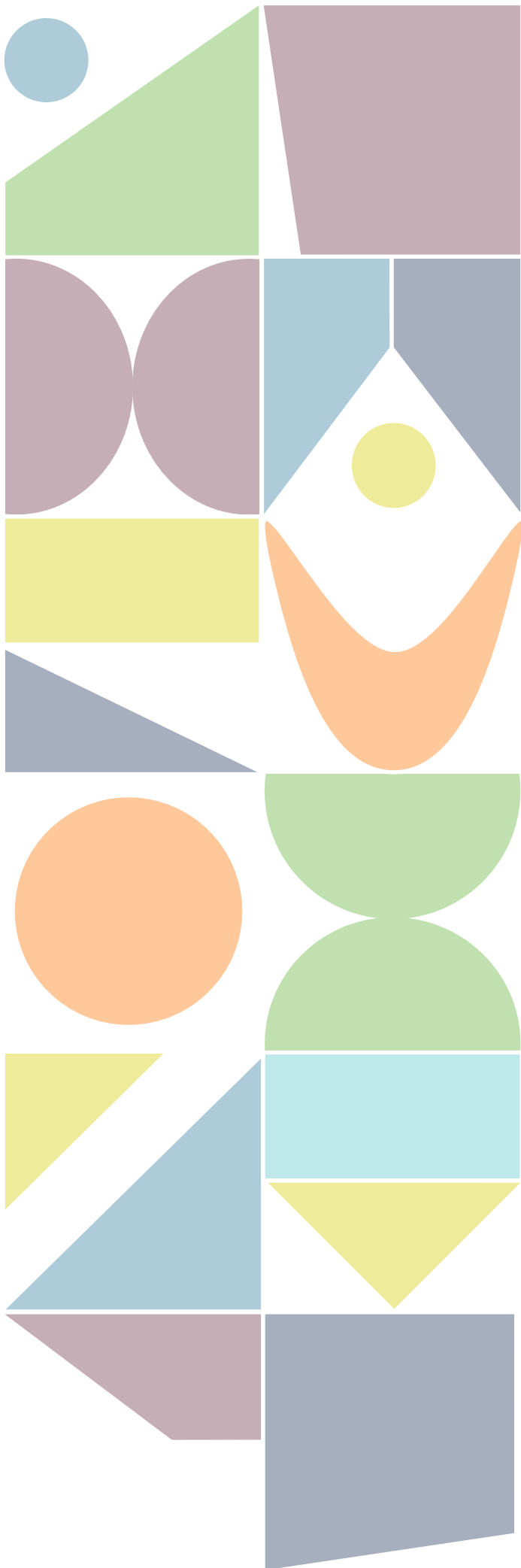
WHITLEY BAY HIGH SCHOOL

Year 8 Option Booklet

Information For
Year 8 Parents/Carers
and Students

2026/27







Welcome

I am pleased to introduce the Year 8 Option Choices to you through this booklet.



In Year 9 at Whitley Bay High School, you have three options to select.

- Your first is your **language option**. You can choose **one** from:
 - French
 - German
 - Spanish

In order to choose German or French, you must have studied these subjects at Middle School. You do not need any experience of Spanish to choose this as your **language option**. (Please note that you can opt to study two languages by selecting French as your **additional option**).

- Your second options are your **technology options**. You will study **two** of:
 - Design Technology
 - Information Technology (IT)
 - Food Preparation
 - Textiles

(We will ask you to rank your top three choices and you will be allocated two of these.)

- Your third option is your **additional option**. You will study **one** of:
 - Drama
 - Electronics
 - French
 - Jewellery Technology
 - Music
 - Philosophy & Ethics
 - PE - Fitness & Wellbeing
 - PE - Competitive Sports

(We will ask you to rank your top two choices and you will be allocated one of these.)





Contents

The language option (choose one)

- French
- German
- Spanish

The technology option (choose three, two will be allocated)

- Design Technology
- Information Technology (IT)
- Food Preparation
- Art & Design Textiles

The additional option (choose two, one will be allocated)

- Drama
- French
- Jewellery Technology
- Music
- Philosophy & Ethics
- PE - Fitness & Wellbeing
- PE - Competitive Sports
- Electronics



FRENCH

French is an important European language. You will have a fantastic opportunity to learn, build on and use French for the future. You should consider this option if you have a real interest in language. Some of the topics you study are: Shopping and Food, Lifestyle, Holidays and Culture and Modern Medias (including music, film, and social media).

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"In lessons you learn the culture and language of French."

"We usually start off with a find the mistakes starter then we carry on with the lesson which is a mix between verbal and writing tasks."

"We learn French using a wide range and variety of methods, from French songs and video clips to reading authentic texts and writing our own short pieces in French."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"... you enjoy active lessons and like languages."

"... French has really helped me understand the culture of France and the way they communicate and how different it is to English."

"... you want to learn not only French as a language but also discover the culture of France and all the French speaking countries across the world."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"This subject is what I expected because it's an introduction to the basics of French."

"The one thing I didn't expect was how much you need to concentrate and get stuck in with group activities so you can get a chance at actually using your knowledge."

"It is much better than I expected and very engaging as the cultural elements of it bring the subject alive. We also learn grammar, so we can really understand how the language works and be confident using it ourselves."



GERMAN

German is an important European language, so if you enjoyed studying German at middle school this would be a good option for you. You have to have studied German in Year 8 to take this subject.

Some of the topics you study are:

Shopping and Food/Lifestyle/Holidays/Culture and Modern Medias (including music, film, and social media). These follow on from what you have studied in middle school.

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"You learn lots of new German vocabulary and practise using it in different ways. There is a lot of variety in how we learn."

"You play games to help you learn new words and phrases, which I really like. You work in groups and in pairs, all improving your skills together."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"... you love words and languages. People who are keen and prepared to work together will get a lot out of this."

"... you are the kind of person who can concentrate because German needs close attention, especially how to pronounce the words and apply the grammar."

"... you enjoy learning vocabulary and are willing to do that bit extra to get ahead."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"No, because it is more interactive than in Year 8. It is more fun than I expected."

"Yes, it is what I expected. You learn a lot and cover topics more quickly."



SPANISH

With an estimated 460 million native speakers, Spanish is the world's second most widely spoken language, which spans from countries as diverse as Mexico and Argentina to the USA and Spain. The influence of Hispanic and Latino culture is seen across the globe in football, music, cinema, and more topics which you will study through engaging and interactive language lessons. If you want to take Spanish for GCSE when you are in Year 10, then you will need to have studied it in Year 9.

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"We have lots of engaging activities to take part in, like playing fun games both in class and online using Languagenut. There are lots of open, friendly discussions in which we can all get involved and techniques which make language learning fun and interesting."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"You would like to expand on your knowledge of Spanish or learn a new language altogether and if you like to be engaged and have fun in your lessons."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"It's better than I expected. Starting high school can be very daunting but the friendly and fun atmosphere that came with my Spanish lessons really helped me settle in and made me want to learn more about different languages."



DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Design Technology in Year 9 builds on the experiences from middle school but extends them significantly using the school's equipment and facilities to allow the students to develop as designers. Students will use and become confident using multiple materials including timbers, polymers, smart materials and electronics circuits. They will develop key skills to become creative designers and manufacturers. We spend some time looking at new and exciting developments within design and technology, key designers and make use our 3d printers, laser cutter and CAD software to link our designs to industry.

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"In lessons we have done lots of different things such as learning about different designers and creating our own circuit to make a night light. I designed and made mine for my cousin."

"Lots of the lessons are practical. I have really enjoyed designing and making my Funko Pop."

"We get to use the computers a lot for drawing in 3D as well as using paper and pencil. We also get to use all the different machines to make our products. I enjoyed using polymorph in my Funko Pop figure."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"... you are creative, love designing and making things and enjoy using your knowledge to solve problems."

"... you enjoy learning about how things work."

"... you are creative thinker and can come up with ideas that maybe nobody else has thought of."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"It is much more advanced than middle school and that is good."

"I really enjoyed the Funko Pop project and can't wait to take it home to show my family."



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

This option will provide the opportunity to learn, develop and perfect important digital literacy skills that can be used across all subjects and in life outside of school. Students will learn aspects of digital interface design, digital accessibility as well as data modelling and manipulation skills. The course has been designed to suit students of all levels of digital literacy, and is equally suited to girls and boys.

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"This is a creative and dynamic lesson using computers to plan, design and create eye-catching and accessible IT systems."

"I have learned lots of different IT techniques that not only help me in this lesson, but in all of my other lessons, and even outside of school!"

"I have been supported to experiment with different design principles, and how best to use my creativity to design and make a system that users would really love to use, and want to keep coming back to."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"... you enjoy working on computers using different software packages."

"... you want to learn why companies make their software look and work like it does."

"... you want to increase your IT skills and equip yourself for the future."

"... you want to be part of the digital revolution!"

"... you really want to have fun while learning a range of new skills."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"I thought I would be using the computers every lesson, but I loved learning about the different parts of IT, and why companies make the decisions they do."

"I have learnt so much more than I originally thought, and I am now so much more confident when using technology."



FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

Food in Year 9 is a foundation for GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition. Food is a science-based subject as you will learn about nutrition and how ingredients work together. You will do a combination of practical and theory-based lessons.

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"It's a really good subject and you do practical lessons where you learn how to use different pieces of equipment and make a range of different foods."

"We do theory lessons and have learnt about the role of different ingredients."

"We make a range of different foods. I really liked the Greggs Sausage roll Christmas Project."

"You have to be well organised as you need to be prepared for your practical lessons."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"... you enjoy science and have a genuine interest in food."

"... you enjoy doing practical work."

"... you are keen to learn about the theory behind food and how recipes work."

"... you are super organised and like to get involved in different activities."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"Yes, it is. A mixture of practical work and theory."

"This course is an excellent foundation to GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition."



ART AND DESIGN TEXTILES

This Textiles option allows you to get creative. If you are interested in fashion and creative textiles then this is the option for you. During year 9 you will complete two modules, one based around creative textile techniques, the other a mini project based around a topic of your choice.

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"It's a really creative and practical lesson where you can develop your own ideas."

"We have learned about lots of different textile artists and decorative techniques such as applique, quilting, embroidery, transfer and lino printing."

"We have done fashion drawing which was really fun, even if you are not very good at drawing the teachers show you how to do it."

"You do a design and make project and make a textiles product using the skills you have learnt."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"... you are passionate about fashion and textiles."

"... you enjoy doing practical work."

"... you want to make original and creative textiles work."

"... you enjoy working with a range of different materials and equipment."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"Yes, it is, you do lots of practical work and using the sewing machine."

"We get a chance to do so many more techniques."

"This course is an excellent foundation to GCSE Art and Design Textiles."



DRAMA

Drama is a creative and practical subject where you learn about different styles of theatre, working with scripts, devising, and using vocal and physical skills to communicate character and meaning.

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"Drama is really interactive and fun! We do lots of practical work. It is a chance to express your emotions through performing and show creativity with the scripts that you get to explore."

"I love working with my friends and performing pieces we have practised."

"Drama is all about understanding what it's like to put yourself in somebody else's shoes. You will have the opportunity to create your own work as well as look at professionally written plays."

"As a class we read plays and then act out scenes. We also get to write our own scripts."

"As well as acquiring the skills involved in creating and performing, you will also be able to develop skills in working with others and problem solving and communication. You will find that drama will help you feel more self-confident and prepare you to deal with a range of different situations and people."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"... you are quietly confident. You need to have ideas or be good at developing other people's ideas. Don't worry if you haven't got many skills yet, the teachers will help you develop them."

"... you like working with different people and don't get embarrassed about showing your work to others."

"... you are fairly outgoing and like expressing yourself. Drama will really improve your confidence and public speaking."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"This subject is what I expected, but it is also more of a challenge. You have to concentrate but the lessons are also fun and I look forward to drama every week."

"The subject is better than I expected! The curriculum is very engaging and enjoyable."

"It wasn't quite what I expected, but I really enjoy Drama and I am choosing it for GCSE."



ELECTRONICS

Electronics allows the students to develop key skills within electronics and systems. This includes programming as well as building key manufacturing and designing knowledge. Students have access to all the school's design and technology equipment and tools allowing the students to build in confidence and skills. They will work individually and as teams to complete a variety of different projects and challenges, including a LED Christmas Tree, Timer and bike light.

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"I like the practical parts of the lesson and being able to make the parts needed for a bike light, like programming, making a PCB and soldering."

"We have learnt about what is happening in the world of electronics, and I liked thinking about new technology."

"It's a great subject for people wanting to learn new skills and have fun learning more about D.T."

"It was a good alternative from desk work, and the practical skills come in useful for any coursework projects."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"... you enjoy making things and understanding how they work."

"... you want to try something new and different within DT."

"... you enjoy working independently and as a team. You understand the value of teamwork."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"Not really. We are looking at self-driving cars and also hands on accuracy work as well as circuits. I really enjoy this!"

"It was expecting just lots of programming but it is much more varied."



JEWELLERY TECHNOLOGY

In Jewellery Technology the students will have access to a wide range of equipment, tools and materials within the school's technology department. Students will develop Design and Technology knowledge to develop a range of creative design skills and learn how to use a wide range of manufacturing techniques to create different types of jewellery. Students are introduced to key jewellery designers and make use of our CAD / CAM equipment to enhance and develop their skills and knowledge.

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"This is a really creative and practical lesson where we make lots of different designs of jewellery."

"We have tried loads of different techniques; I have enjoyed looking at the way jewellery designers work like Tatty Devine then using this to make our own laser cut products."

"We are really encouraged to experiment with new techniques and try some creative design. We have longer design and make projects and one-off challenges which are really fun and competitive."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"... you are creative, love following trends and like to create new and exciting things."

"... you enjoy making things and want to develop your manufacturing skills further."

"... you want to try something new and different within DT."

"... you are an inventive and resourceful thinker and want to create unique products."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"I expected it to be lots of making things out of metal and I'm using so many different materials, I love it!"

"I thought I knew what to expect but I was wrong. We are working in really exciting creative ways."

"I didn't expect that we would be using computers to design our jewellery. This has built my confidence in other areas of technology."



MUSIC

Music in Year 9 involves:

- Performing - Playing a musical instrument and singing.
- Composing - Creating your own music.
- Listening - Learning about and listening to different styles of music
- Music Technology - Using computer software to produce music.

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"We listen to music and work out how it's put together so that we can write our own music in the same style."

"We play instruments such as keyboards, guitars and percussion instruments as well as our own instruments."

"I love being able to record my composition ideas using the computer software and then listening back to them."

"We were singing in harmony; I love singing so it doesn't feel like work."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"... you enjoy playing a musical instrument or singing."

"... you like listening to all sorts of different types of music."

"... you want to improve your understanding of music theory."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"No. I hadn't realised how many different styles of music there were. I used to just listen to the latest R&B but now I listen to all sorts of stuff."

"No. I thought it would be all music theory and worksheets. There is some of that but we also get to perform on instruments and sing."

"Yes. I love music so I knew I would enjoy it. I love finding out about different styles of music."

"No. I never thought I would be able to write my own music... and it actually sounded good!"



PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

Philosophy and Ethics is a course where you get to explore big ideas and questions about human existence. You need to be curious about the world around you and use your reasoning skills to justify your ideas. You will need to be a good listener as well as a good communicator both orally and in written work. In Year 9 philosophy and ethics we will study the following:

- Greek Philosophy and early philosophers
- Moral Philosophy: Ethical theories about what a 'good' action is and how this can be applied in different scenarios.
- Ethical issues around life, autonomy and choice
- Metaphysics: what exists and how do we know?
- Ethical scenarios and human responsibility
- Meaning, purpose and what is the goal of human life?

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"There isn't really such a thing as a typical lesson. Lessons are very varied. We do a lot of different activities. We might explore a moral issue, or we might discuss a situation together and work out what we think might be the right answer."

"There is no other lesson in which you can express and explain why you do or don't believe in something."

"It lets you question things then find out possible answers. It also gives you the chance to find out what others think and believe."

"We test different ideas using scenarios and thought experiments to see how well different philosophical arguments hold up."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"... you like ultimate questions, because they make you think and can really confuse you and have no definite answer. It is quite scary when you think about it."

"...You're willing to change your mind when you hear a strong argument, or at least understand why someone else thinks differently."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"Lessons are very enjoyable - everyone becomes comfortable with expressing opinions without feeling worried about what others think."



PE - FITNESS AND WELLBEING

The extra PE - Fitness and wellbeing option will give students an insight into how they can look after their physical, mental and social wellbeing as well as develop an understanding of aspects of health and leadership. Students will participate in activities such as fitness including circuit training, HITT, Yoga and Pilates. The aim will be to promote and participate in a healthy lifestyle.

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"Learn what we mean by the term wellbeing and the steps we can take to promote positive self care."

"Practically take part in activities such as fitness programming, weight training, outdoor boot camps, boxercise, pilates, continuous training and yoga in order to promote a healthy attitude towards fitness."

"Learn how a healthy diet can promote a positive mental and physical attitude and improve our general sense of wellbeing."

"Lessons will be a mixture of practical and theoretical lessons."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"You enjoy taking part in physical exercise."

"You enjoy learning about all aspects of physical health and fitness."

"You are confident taking part in activities that improves physical, mental and social health."

"You enjoy PE and you are considering GCSE as an option."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"I really enjoyed all the different sections of the course that developed my understanding of health and fitness."

"I enjoyed participating in a range of activities with my friends."



PE - COMPETITIVE SPORTS

The extra PE - Team Sports option will give students an insight into the tactic and skill development of team sports games required at examination PE level. Students will participate in a number of different sports such as Football, Rugby, Table Tennis, Netball and Volleyball. Some lessons will also be classroom based in order to get an insight into training requirements of an athlete.

Student View

WHAT DO YOU DO IN LESSONS?

"Develop skills within game situations and look at different tactical strategies in order to improve performance in each sport."

"Learn theoretical lessons, looking at developing training programmes."

YOU WILL ENJOY THIS SUBJECT IF...

"...you care about fair-play and want to be a good team player. This option gives you a lot of confidence so don't worry if you are a bit shy now. You will learn how to improve and the teachers will encourage you."

"... you like taking part in a variety of different sports within school."

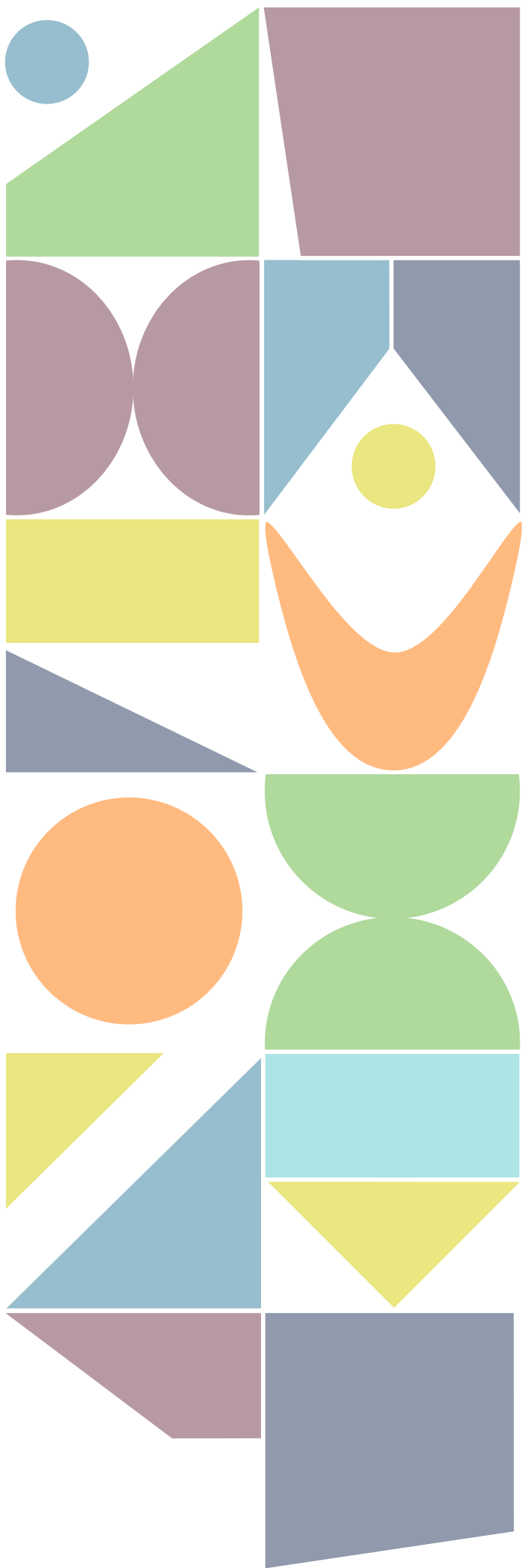
"... you are confident and like talking to people about how to improve technique and performance."

"... you are a keen sports performer who is considering GCSE PE."

IS THE SUBJECT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

"No. I didn't think it would be this good - but it is! It's great!"

"Yes it was, as we get the chance to take part in a wide variety of sports which was what I hoped it would be."





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