What do you particularly enjoy about studying this subject?

I really enjoy Computer Science as the course really challenges how you think. I really enjoy the problem-solving activities and then applying them to a programming context. The part of the course I relish the most however, is programming and developing my own project (coursework). This really allows you to apply all the skills learnt in class and be creative.

How much work is involved? (hours in lessons / outside of lessons)

You can very easily become absorbed in the world of Computer Science, especially when it comes to solving problems and programming – this can become quite addictive and rewarding. There are four hours a week of lessons which are a good blend of theory and practical. Computer Science uses a flipped learning approach which really helps your learning and development, as the lessons concentrate on the activities and programming which I enjoy the most. Outside of lessons you are expected to carry out the same amount of time as you do in class, working on your revision techniques and working on examination questions.

If you studied the subject at GCSE how different is studying it at A Level/BTEC Level 3?

A Level has similar topics as GCSE. However, A Level is more in depth and complex. A Level allows you to explore further the amazing world of Computer Science and helps you to really understand how a computer works and functions. There is more independence required with A Level which is a good thing, as this allows you to develop as a student and perform to the best of your ability. Although you are more independent when studying A Level, help is always at hand which is reassuring.
How are you assessed and how regularly?
Assessment is a key component at A Level and really helps you improve. Practice exams are organised every 4-6 weeks with practice questions covered in lessons too. This really helps you improve your performance and grade. Exam analysis is carried out after exams have been completed and answers are often recorded on video to help you go back over anything that may have been missed.

What support have you received and is support available if you don’t understand something?
Support is always available whether you are in college or not. The use of Microsoft Teams is very useful as you can always ask your teacher for help via a message or a phone call. The response is always prompt and helpful which is great and very supporting. As well as the lessons, there are also tutorials in class and recorded tutorials which help with anything you may not understand first time.

Have you received careers support and what are your future plans?
Carmel has a very dedicated careers support team and there is always someone to talk to who can help with your next step and progression. The lesson content and teaching also prepare you for the world of work in the software industry often giving examples of coding questions that may be asked at your next job interview.

Visit our website for more information about our A Level Computer Science course