

Dear Parent/Carer

As you know, your child is now at the stage of their education where they have the opportunity to have a direct say in what they study for the next two years through choosing their option subjects. The decisions they make now can have an effect on decisions they can make later as sixteen year olds – attending Sixth Form, starting employment, taking up training or going to college. It is very important, therefore, that they choose wisely and leave themselves as many avenues open as possible for the future. To help them do this, and to help you support them we have set up a programme of events this term and next term.

To begin the process, all Year 9 students have had the options process explained to them in an assembly on October 10<sup>th</sup>. The key points of this information are the time line of events, and what choices they have. The information below shows the timeline of events in place to help guide students:

<b>Monday 10th October</b>	Options Process Assembly
<b>Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Options Taster Day: Short sessions of the subjects students have not experienced during Years 7-9 to provide an insight into that course at GCSE level
<b>Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Options Evening for Parents You are invited to listen to a presentation on the Options process and will have an opportunity to ask questions. Representatives from options subjects will be available to explain the courses available. Senior staff will be able to offer individual personalised advice on the best options route for each student
<b>Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October onwards</b>	Subject teachers and tutors available to discuss courses with students. Students are being advised to ask for a time to talk through options if they need to
<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November</b>	Options booklet with details of courses and a straw poll form taken home for discussion
<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Careers day – an opportunity for an insight about which KS4 courses can lead to which careers
<b>Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Straw poll form deadline – student hand in the straw poll form to their tutor. After this the final option blocks to choose from will be determined
<b>Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Year 9 snapshot sent home, with final option choices form. This will give up to data information on the GCSE grades teachers believe

students will achieve at the end of Year 11, if the course is chosen

<b>Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Year 9 Parents Evening – an opportunity to discuss the content and suitability of option courses with subject teachers, as well as gaining feedback on your child’s current academic life
<b>Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February</b>	Completed Option sheets to be returned to Form Tutors.
<b>21<sup>st</sup> March onwards</b>	Students have individual consultations with Senior Team about options. Confirmation or alteration of options taken will happen at these meetings

In terms of what students can choose to study, all students must study the core curriculum in English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science, Beliefs and Values and Physical Education.

In addition to the core curriculum all students **must choose at least one EBacc subject**. The choices are: a Humanities (History or Geography), or a Modern Foreign Language (French or German) or Computer Science. In addition to the core curriculum and the EBacc subject all students must make **a further three choices**. Students can choose to study additional EBacc subjects or choose to pursue non-EBacc subjects.

Initially, there is a free choice of options (the straw poll). This will enable us to “block” the option subjects so they can be timetabled, and so that the maximum number of students can get their preferred option course combinations. The final options form will require students to pick one course from each “block”. The option subjects currently are:

**EBACC Subjects (at least one must be taken)**

Computer Science  
French  
Geography  
German  
History  
Science (Triple)

**NON-EBACC Subjects**

3D Design\*  
Art\*  
Business Studies  
Catering  
Construction  
Drama  
Media Studies  
Music  
Resistant Materials  
Sports Science

\*NB Art and 3D design cannot both be chosen

As you can see from the timeline above, options forms will be gathered on February 26<sup>th</sup>, so there is plenty of time for the students to think about the choices and get advice. After this date the choices of the whole year group will be collated, and carefully analysed to ensure each student has appropriate options. Please be aware that all option choices are subject to timetable and staffing constraints. If there is a problem with a particular option subject we will inform parents and students as soon as possible. Equally, if a new course becomes available this information will be communicated at the first possible opportunity

If you have any questions about the options process please contact your child tutor, Ms Poynter (Y9 Progress Leader) or myself and we will endeavor to help.

Yours faithfully

C Jesson  
Assistant Headteacher