



December 2023

Dear Family,

Year 9 Options 2024 - Information Letter

The movement into Key Stage 4 is an exciting and important time in a young person's education. For the first time, they will be given a choice over the subjects they learn and start to follow a bespoke curriculum that is put together based on what they enjoy studying and what they might pursue later on.

In order to prepare for this year 9 will be learning about careers and further study in their L4L theme in the new year and starting to prepare to make their option choices. This letter and the accompanying video aim to help your both, parent/guardian and student to have positive conversations towards what you would like to choose and what you can choose. It is really important that you understand the process so you can make the most informed decision possible.

How does the options process work?

Firstly, as part of the national curriculum students will continue to study a number of subjects regardless of options they pick. The subjects they will have to study without choice are:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Double Science (unless triple is selected)
- PE (non-qualification)
- Personal Development

In addition to this, students will pick one option from four separate blocks. These will form the existing allocation of what they will study in Key Stage 4. In order to make this decision correctly, students will have an options taster day on Wednesday, 17 January which will enable them to take part in lessons to help them decide if they are going to select them or not. Options evening will take place on Thursday, 8 February and will involve students, parents/guardians having a short interview with a senior member of staff to assess if the choices are suitable and fall within the selection guidelines. These choices will then be submitted for a review at the end of the meeting.

What is the English Baccalaureate (EBACC)

The English Baccalaureate for students comprises of English Language and Literature; Mathematics; Science; Geography or History; and a Language (French or German or a community home language) and has been identified by the government as a group of qualifications that will keep your options open for further study and future careers. The EBacc is made up of the subjects which are considered essential to access University degrees and enhance student opportunities. Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can help improve a young person's performance in English and maths.

Why are some subjects different colours?

You will find some subjects are coloured differently than others. **Golden** subjects must be one of your choices. You will see that **golden** subjects appear in more than one block to give you the maximum amount of choice. One of these along with a Language that is coloured **red** will qualify you for the EBacc. We want to celebrate the

diverse cultures we have in this school and are able to offer a spread of languages, so your child has the opportunity to flourish linguistically. Studying a language is highly recognised by potential employers and will enhance your child's career prospects. If your target grade is a 5 or above, you will need to choose a language coloured in red.

Blue subjects are those that have an entry requirement. These are some of our most challenging subjects and therefore we want to make sure that only the students that will be able to meet the academic demands of that subject will select them.

Computer Science requires a grade 6 in Maths in your latest assessment point report.

Triple Science requires a 7 in Science and Maths in your last assessment point report.

We have high aspirations for all our students and would therefore encourage the following the following when picking options:

- pick one gold subject.
- pick one language highlighted in red (if your target grade is a 5 or above)
- only pick a blue subject if you meet the entry requirements as stated above.

Key dates and processes Spring term 1 (January-February)

Students will receive options advice and support within L4L career themed lessons with their tutors.

Assembly with Mrs J Kaur (Gill)

I will be speaking to all students regarding options choices and taking them through the key themes from this information letter.

Options Taster Day – Wednesday, 17 January 2024

Students will choose 5 options they would like to explore more. They will take an hour's taster class in these on Wednesday 17th January. What you choose to do on a taster class has no bearing on if you are given a place in a subject or not. Therefore, I suggest if a student knows they are 100% going to choose an option regardless it is probably not a good choice to waste a taster session on.

Options Evening – Thursday, 8 February 2024

This is where you and your parent/guardian will attend a short but important interview with a senior member of staff. You will be asked to formally submit your option choices and asked questions as to why you have chosen what you have. Your eligibility to any of the Blue options will also be checked at this point. All Heads of Departments will be available to talk with you in the Sports Hall before your appointment if you have any last-minute questions. After you have submitted your choices, you will then go back to the Head of Department and get your pre course reading list that you will work on before starting your options in September. To give you every chance of achieving your potential it is important you complete this reading in preparation for the beginning of your subjects in September.

Why making the correct choice is important

Key Stage 4 options mark the start towards the journey into your future higher education and your career and what lies beyond GCSEs. Once these choices are submitted on the options evening on Thursday 8th February,

there will be no opportunity to make changes. These class numbers are what the school uses to timetable and allocate staffing, so it is important students think about their choices. Classes fill up quickly so although it is not a case of first come first serve, sometimes choices submitted after options evening cannot guarantee places.

Due to the amount of important work covered from day 1 of year 10, students cannot switch options during the key stage. It is therefore so important that students take this selection process seriously and consult parents, tutors and subject teachers to make the best possible decision.

Students should look at a number of decisions to help guide their choices:

- Firstly, there is the link to a possible career they are thinking of taking up at a later date. Staff are always on hand to help you understand which subjects help prepare you for certain careers. Your L4L Careers theme will also cover this.
- Secondly it should be a subject you have passion for and are motivated to succeed in.
- Thirdly, it has been proved over the years that student's success when playing to their strengths. It is worth looking at the subjects you are doing well in.

Option Blocks

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
History	History	History	History
Geography	German	Geography	Geography
French	Urdu	French	Spanish
Spanish	Triple Science	Punjabi	French
Arabic	Business Studies	Dance	Computer Science
Business Studies	Physical Education	Drama	Product Design
Health and Social Care Music	Religious Education	Art	Graphic Design
Music Physical Education	Travel & Tourism	Digital ICT	Art
Physical Education	Textiles	Religious Education	Drama
BTEC Music	Health and Social Care	Travel and Tourism	

Thank you for taking the time to read this document and I look forward to welcoming you to the options evening on Thursday, 8 February.

Yours sincerely



Mrs J Kaur
Acting Assistant Principal



Miss M Green
Principal