YEAR 8 OPTIONS
STARTING SEPTEMBER 2020
Year 8 Options – Starting September 2020

Over recent years GCSEs have been ‘reformed’. These new GCSEs are:
- graded differently using 1-9 (1-Lowest, 9-Highest)
- More 'rigorous' and academic with a greater focus on knowledge
- Very little coursework, more assessment through formal examinations

Because of these new and more challenging courses, two years ago we made the decision to extend key stage 4 from two years to three.

Students in year 8 will go through the options process and begin their GCSE subjects in September 2020 when they start year 9.

These courses will run for three years with final examinations during the summer when they are in year 11. Many schools across the country have moved to this three-year model for GCSEs, with early indications being very positive.

Making subject choices in Year 8 is extremely important. This booklet will help guide students and their families through the options process. Information about each individual course is available on the school website.

Along with individual GCSE grades there are other measures that students starting their GCSEs in September 2020 will be evaluated on: EBacc, Attainment 8 and Progress 8.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a performance measure that shows whether a pupil has secured a C grade or above (or grade 4+ in new GCSE grades) across a core of academic subjects. These subjects are:
- English Language and Literature
- Maths
- Science
- History or Geography
- A Language
Attainment 8 is the average grade a student achieves across 8 subjects. The grades are added up and divided by 10 (10 because English and Maths are counted twice).

This measure will be used when students move onto the next phase of their education after GCSEs. If a student doesn’t take 8 subjects, missing slots are replaced by a zero. Their total is always divided by 10.

Technical Awards

- More vocational
- Equip learners with the practical, transferable skills and core knowledge
- Grades count towards Attainment8 and Progress 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technical Award</th>
<th>Legacy GCSE grading</th>
<th>9 to 1 GCSE grading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L2 Distinction*</td>
<td>A*</td>
<td>8/9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 Distinction</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 Merit</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 Pass</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>4/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 Advanced Credit</td>
<td>D/E</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 Credit</td>
<td>F/G</td>
<td>1/2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Options Offering

All students study a Core of subjects
- English, Maths, Science Faith and Society (no exam) and PE (no exam).

All students choose:
- either History or Geography.
- a further 3 subjects (these can be either GCSEs or Technical Awards)
- 2 reserve options

*We encourage students to continue studying a Language where appropriate or want to gain EBacc*

Things to think about:
- Think about yourself and what your needs are now and in the future.
- Identify the information and people who will help with your decisions.
- Look for a good “balance” of subjects.
- Do NOT choose a subject just because your friend is taking that subject.
Everyone must submit an “Initial Interest Form” before 3pm Initial Interest 17th January 2020

This can only be done electronically via school’s Office 365 system. The aim is to allow us to check the potential choices you are making are appropriate.

This initial interest form is not your final decision and we fully expect people to change their minds.

Year 8 Parents Evening is on Wednesday 22nd January 2020.

The final option selections must also be submitted online between 10th and 13th of February 2020.

Because all the options have to fit into a timetable for everybody, it is not always possible to make the selections work.

If not enough students opt for a course, we may not be able to run it.

This is why reserve choices are important. Each student needs to identify two reserve choices.

If reserve choices are being used, students and their families will be informed

Curriculum

- All students study a core curriculum of English, Maths, Science, Core PE and “Faith and Personal Development”.
  - Science: All students will start on the Science Trilogy award (worth two GCSEs). During year 9 where appropriate, students will be offered the option to take Separate Sciences (three GCSEs).
  - Core PE and “Faith and Personal Development” are compulsory lessons, however they are not examined.
• Students will need to select:
  o **Select either Geography or History**
  o **Select a further three subjects from the list**

• Certain subjects have pre-requisites
  o Computer Science GCSE – Band A/B/C in Maths and/or Computer Science
  o Languages GCSE – Band A/B/C in chosen language
  o PE GCSE – Band A/B/C in English and Science. Participate in a qualifying sport outside of school (and will be throughout the course)
  o Psychology GCSE – Band A/B/C in Maths and Science

When you make your choices think about:-
• **Taking a variety of different kinds of subjects to keep your choices open in the future.**
• What you might like to study in the 6th Form or at college.
• Being physically fit if you choose subjects like PE and Drama - it’s no good being a person who hates bringing their kit to school if you opt for these subjects!

---

**Accessing Subject Information Sheets and Submitting Initial Interest and Final Option Forms**

On the school website there is a link to **Year 8 Options page**. Within that page there are links to all the **subject information sheets**. There is also a link to both the Initial Interest Form and Final Option form
# Year 8 Options - 2020

## Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English (Language &amp; Literature)</td>
<td>PE (no exam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>Faith and Ethics (no exam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Humanities (select one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Open Choice (select three and two reserves)

### GCSE and Technical Awards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art (GCSE)</td>
<td>Mandarin (GCSE)²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art and Design (BTEC Technical Award)</td>
<td>Media Studies (GCSE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business (GCSE)</td>
<td>Music Performance (RSL Technical Award)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Enterprise and Marketing</td>
<td>Music Technology (RSL Technical Award)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Cambridge National Technical Award)</td>
<td>Musical Theatre (RSL Technical Award)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science (GCSE)¹</td>
<td>Photography (GCSE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Technology – Textiles (GCSE)</td>
<td>Physical Education (GCSE)³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Technology – Materials (GCSE)</td>
<td>Psychology (GCSE)⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama (GCSE)</td>
<td>Sociology (GCSE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French (GCSE)²</td>
<td>Spanish (GCSE)²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography (GCSE)</td>
<td>Sport (BTEC Technical Award)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics (GCSE)</td>
<td>Travel and Tourism (BTEC Technical Award)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Social Care (BTEC Technical Award)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History (GCSE)</td>
<td>ASDAN (guided Choice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality and Catering (Technical Award)</td>
<td>Construction (Guided Choice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT (Cambridge National Technical Award)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iMedia (Cambridge National Technical Award)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Course prerequisites (subjects that have a number after them have the following prerequisites)

1 Band A/B/C in Maths and/or Computer Science
2 Band A/B/C in chosen Language
3 Band A/B/C in English & Science and participate in a qualifying sport outside of school (and will be throughout ks4)
4 Band A/B/C in Maths and Science
5 Students who started the Mandarin Excellence Programme are expected to take Mandarin GCSE
Year 8 Options – Timeline

4th December
Information Evening & Option Website Launched

17th January
Initial Interest Form Submitted (via Office365)

22nd January
Year 8 Parents Evening

Between 10th and 13th February
Final Option Form Submitted

Feb-May
Option Interviews (where necessary)

May/June
Option Allocations and Letters sent home