

22 January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

You and your child may now be starting to think about the Year 9 Options process. Please find attached a copy of the Options Booklet and the Options Selection Form. These documents are also available on the school website. Students will additionally receive a paper copy of both the booklet and the selection form.

The Options Booklet is designed to provide key information about each subject to help support students in making informed decisions when choosing their option subjects. It also includes important dates and details about the overall options process.

There will be presentations about the Options Process on Wednesday 12 February during the Year 9 Parents' Evening. These presentations are intended to provide clarity about the process and to help you feel informed and confident in supporting your child as they make decisions about the subject's they will study in Years 10 and 11, and how these choices may link to post-16 pathways and future careers. Throughout the process, your child's tutor, the Head of Year, subject teachers, and the SEND team will all be available to provide support and answer any questions you may have.

In the meantime, please find below a summary of frequently asked questions that you may find helpful as you begin to consider the options process.

FAQs

1.) Can students choose Triple Science, then one less Option subject to lessen the workload?

ANSWER: They do not select to do Triple Science; it is only offered to certain students based on ability (generally set 1 and set 2). This means that these students will have an extra GCSE. This has been a long-established pathway and students have generally coped well with the workload. If issues arise, students may revert to Double Science.

2.) Are there any courses students can't do together?

ANSWER: Students cannot take different qualifications in the same subject. For example, they cannot do GCSE Media and Media BTEC, GCSE PE and SPORT BTEC, etc. The differences will be in the content and the way they are examined.

3.) Are there subjects with entry requirements?

ANSWER: There are no formal entry requirements; however, we strongly recommend students who choose to study Computer Science to be working on a strong Grade 3 in Maths. This is because the course demands high levels of mathematical skills. OCR National in IMedia is an ICT course that does not require a similar level of mathematical skills.

4.) Can students do both Geography and History?

ANSWER: The school does not actively block this option pathway. However, students need to consider whether this will provides them with a balanced curriculum.

5.) Can a student choose to study a language that they have not been taught in KS3. For example, he wants to do French, but he had German in year 7-9.

ANSWER: Each case is considered individually. For example, if a student has regular access to the language, or perhaps he has spent time in the country, the head of MFL will meet with the student and assess his ability.

6.) Will a student be at an advantage if he returns the form early?

ANSWER: No. Options Selection Forms are only processed after the deadline.

7.) Are GCSE Subjects all taught in sets? Will students stay in their year 9 sets in English and Maths?

ANSWER: Not all subjects are set. Some subjects, such as GCSE History and GCSE Media, are taught in mixed-ability classes. Where setting is used, it is normally reviewed at the end of each academic year, meaning sets may change between Year 9 and Year 10.

8.) Do students need to be re-assessed for SEND need before GCSE exams for extra time and other access arrangements?

ANSWER: Yes. Students are assessed by our specialist assessor, and applications are made to exam boards in the Autumn Term of Year 10. Decisions are made by the exam boards based on evidence, and the school will arrange any further assessments if required.

9.) Do students need to select one subject from each column on the Options Form?

ANSWER: Yes. One subject must be selected from each column.

10.) Can students switch to a different subject if they decide they do not like their current choice?

ANSWER: No. Once the subjects are finalised, it is not possible to change.

The final deadline to return the options selection form is **Thursday, 19 March 2026**; forms should be returned to tutors.

Please ensure you read the information in the Options Booklet and speak to teachers at Parents' Evening about your child's subjects and current performance to help inform and support your decision-making.

If you have any more questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's tutor, Head of Year (Mr Foster), or the SEND team.

Kind regards,
Mrs Alltraine
Assistant Headteacher