

## Year 8 GCSE Options FAQ – Feb 2025

### 1. What does 'Year 9 Only' mean?

It means that this part of the curriculum is studied by all students in Year 9 but not in Years 10 or 11. Core Technology, Core ICT and the Creative Arts Curriculum are part of the Year 9, but not Y10 or 11 curriculum.

### 2. What does the 'C' in PSHCE stand for?

'C' is for **Citizenship** education which fosters pupils' keen awareness and understanding of democracy, government and how laws are made and upheld.

### 3. Is there opportunity to drop or add a subject in Year 10? Is there the opportunity to swap subjects once Year 10 has started?

It is not normal to drop any GCSE subjects in Year 10. However, in exceptional circumstances we may explore with the SENDCo whether a bespoke curriculum would be in the best interest for a student with special educational needs (SEN).

Some students may wish to take a GCSE in their 'mother tongue' in Year 10.

We would not recommend, and in the large majority of cases will not be able to support, students swapping GCSE subjects once they have started the course in September 2025.

The majority of classes are at maximum capacity across Year 9, as the number of classes created reflects the student demand for the subject from the options process. It is important that you think carefully about your choices prior to submitting your form for this reason.

### 4. Is GCSE Physical Education the same as Sports Studies?

No. Sports Studies is not a GCSE but is instead a vocational qualification. We only offer GCSE PE.

### 5. Can you study both French and Spanish plus two other choices?

No. The additional language is one of the two choices.

### 6. Can students 'opt out' of any Core subjects?

Not unless there are exceptional circumstances for why a student should not study a core subject. These would be discussed with Heads of House and/ or the SENDCo. If the evidence presented was strongly in support of the student not undertaking a particular subject, then we would look at alternative subjects and/ or arrangements.

### 7. Where do we get the Options Form from?

The Options Form will be shared electronically via email on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Final deadline for submission is 14<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

### 8. Will all students sit the GCSE Religious Studies short course?

No. Only students who choose to study GCSE RS will sit the full course exam. All other students will study RS for one lesson/ fortnight in addition to their PSHCE curriculum.

**9. Can students sit the Combined Science GCSE?**

Yes. All students sit Triple Science in Year 9 and 10 as Paper 1 content is almost identical for triple and combined. At the end of Year 10 following the Year 10 mock examinations we will liaise with parents to discuss the possibility for some students to take the combined science route, Triple Science is, Chemistry, Biology and Physics and are studied as three distinct GCSEs. Students are entered for GCSE at Higher. For combined Science – students can take Higher or Foundation.

**10. What does Foundation and Higher Tier mean?**

The Foundation Tier curriculum in a subject has more accessible content than that of the Higher Tier. Students studying Foundation Tier GCSE can attain grades up to and including Grade 5.