

Welcome to Year 9 Preferences 2026



Our vision is for all adults in the UK to have the literacy skills they need to realise their potential and live life to the full. Help us share the joy of reading.

Why are we here?



- To understand the progress your child has made this academic year and how to make further progress
- To help your child select appropriate and informed preferences going into Key Stage 4
- To support your child in understanding how their decisions can affect their post-16 and employment options

How do I make informed decisions?



Think about:

- The subjects you enjoy
- The subjects you are good at and making progress in
- What you would like to do in the future
- How the course is assessed and whether this plays to your strengths
- Reading carefully through your Preferences Information Booklet and Spring report
- Visiting the school website for the KS4 subject presentations

Who can help me make informed decisions?



➤ Your parent(s) / carer(s)



➤ Teachers

➤ Tutor



➤ Your Head of Year and Deputy Pastoral Leader

➤ Students in Year 10 and 11

What is the Core Curriculum?



- ✓ English Language
- ✓ English Literature
- ✓ Mathematics
- ✓ Science (Triple or Combined) dependent on pathway
- ✓ Core PE (not examined)
- ✓ Personal, Social and Health Education (not examined)

You will achieve either 4, 5 or 6 GCSE's from core subjects alone

Which other subjects can I study?



- This is slightly dependent on the pathway you have been assigned:
 - Blue
 - Pink
 - Green
 - Purple
- Pathways have been assigned through rigorous collection and analysis of data alongside in-depth discussions with staff
- We can offer a broad and balanced curriculum regardless of pathway to every student with plenty of choice
- We aspire for every student to achieve well
- Every student can achieve a high number of GCSE's or equivalent qualifications. Most will achieve 9.
- Read the booklet with your child carefully

Assessment at Key Stage 4



- Traditional GCSE's are achieved by completing exams at the end of Year 11
- BTEC's / CNAT's will often have an exam but marks will also be achieved through non-examined assessment in Year 10 and 11
- Absence is a major barrier to success
- Colleges and apprenticeships have criteria to allow students to enrol on courses. Not all criteria is the same

Your child's report



Threshold	On a trajectory to potentially achieve Grade...
Excellence	8 – 9
Secure	6 – 7
Developing	4 – 5
Foundation	1 – 3

Aptitude for Key Stage 4 Score	Descriptor
1	They should certainly consider studying it as they are likely to achieve well
2	They should consider studying it and can achieve well
3	Your child may struggle but could consider studying it
4	Your child is likely to struggle

Key Stage 4 Grading



GCSE 9-1 Points		BTEC First Award		BTEC Tech Award		
Grade & Points	Grade terms	Grade	Points	Grade	Points	
9		L2 D*	8.5	L2 D*	8.5	
8		L2 D	7	L2 D	7	
7			L2 M	5.5	L2 M	5.5
6		5		Strong Pass (DfE)	L2 P	4
5	4	Standard Pass (DfE)	Level 1 Pass	1.75	L1 D	3
3	L1 M	2		L1 M	2	
2		L1 P		1.25	L1 P	1.25
1	U	U	0	U	0	
U						

Timeline



➤ 13th – 15th April:

Assemblies with subject presentations

➤ 23rd April:

Preferences and Parents Evening

➤ w/c 27th April

Microsoft form emailed

➤ 5th May:

Deadline for returning your form

➤ May-June:

Working on your preferences

➤ July:

Preferences communicated



Why are they called “preferences”?



- Some schools have defined “option blocks” but this narrows the choices for students
- We want to see what students “prefer” to study and then create the option blocks to best fit the preferences
- The Microsoft preferences form will ask for a rank order with reserve choices

Will my child get their preferences?



- Ideally yes!
- *Unless* more students opt for a course than there are places available
- *Unless* not enough students opt for a course and so it becomes too expensive to run
- *Unless* one preferred subject is on at the same time as another preferred subject in the timetable
- *Unless*, in our opinion the student has made an inappropriate or unwise choice. E.g. Dance AND Drama or Art AND Photography
- *Unless* staffing changes means we don't have a specialist to deliver the course

What if I change my mind?



- Use your time before you complete the form to think carefully
- It's not a race to complete it first. The 5th May deadline is important though
- Once you have submitted your form a very complex process takes place
- Other students may not have got their preference because it was oversubscribed
- Subjects might not have been able to run because you didn't choose it

Wise words from a wise man



Thank You

