

Slide: Key milestones

- On the above slide, you will see an outline of the process that spans the remainder of the academic year.
- You will see that on our return to school in the new year, Year 9 will receive an assembly talking through the GCSE Options Process similar to what I am doing now.
- You and your child will receive a GCSE Options Course Booklet which will be emailed out to you
- On the 14 and 15 January, parents and students will have an opportunity to discuss next steps and subject choices with their child's year 9 subject teachers
- There will also be some appointment slots available with Mrs O'Brien should parents/carers need any information that cannot be found within the resources provided.
- Over the course of the month, students will receive a series of PSHE sessions which will help support their decision making. This includes a focus on Effective Decision Making, the use of Unifrog and an opportunity to hear from our year 10 students about how they are finding their GCSE options and what advice they would they give them.
- Students will be able to use Unifrog which is a platform designed to support them in making the most informed decisions about their future.
- Each student will be provided with their own personal account which offers a wide range of information related to their interests and aspirations.
- The deadline for submitting GCSE Options choices is on **Friday 21 February**, after that time no further changes can be made during year 9
- During the months of March, April and May, the school uses our students' GCSE and A-Level choices to construct our academic timetable for next year. We understand that students may change their mind as the year progresses and for this reason, we allow students an opportunity to request a change at the start of September and then that flexibility is given up until the 30 September. Beyond this point, changes are not made.

Slides 3 and 4 An outstanding curriculum for all

- When designing our curriculum our aim is to ensure that your child receives the best possible education and is prepared for their future.
- We aim to ensure that your child not only does well in her exams but also leaves school with the skills, knowledge, and confidence that she needs to succeed in whatever she chooses to do next.
- With this in mind we have designed our curriculum to ensure that it provides students with a well-rounded education and one which underpins our school's values.

Our curriculum design centres around some key principles.

- Your child will have access to a variety of subjects, including core subjects such as English (Language & Literature), maths, triple science, one Modern Foreign Language, PSHE and short course RS.
- To support your child's wellbeing, all students undertake compulsory PE each week.
- Students then have a choice of selecting up to 3 GCSE subjects from a choice of 17 subjects.
- Here at Nonsuch we do not make our students select either History or Geography, instead we give our students the flexibility to pick subjects that align with their strengths and interests, helping them go deeper into areas that they enjoy.
- The curriculum is designed to be challenging, pushing your child to think critically and solve problems, which prepares her for life after school.
- The curriculum includes lessons that teach practical skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving—important for any career or future study.
- It also promotes respect for all cultures and backgrounds, ensuring a positive learning environment for everyone.

Slide: GCSE Option Subject Choices

- Here at Nonsuch, students can select up to 3 GCSE options from a possible 17 choices.
- This year, changes have been made to the GCSE Textiles course. This subject choice builds on what students have been directly learning about in years 7,8 and 9.
- Due to the nature of the Product Design and DT Textile courses, we stipulate that students cannot study both as there is too much overlap.
- You will notice that there are a few subjects that are not taught in years 7,8 and 9. We have listened to our students and this year, all year 9 students will receive a taster session in Astronomy, DT Textiles and Photography before they have to make their subject choices.

Slide 6- What will the timetable look like?

- Over a two-week period, your child attends 50 one-hour lessons.
- The above slide shows you the breakdown of how many hours is allocated to each subject area.
- For example, you will see that students study Maths for 6 hours and then English Language and Literature for 8 hours.
- Each GCSE subject is allocated 4 hours teaching time over the fortnight.

Slide 7 Core Offer

- Students across all classes will study exactly the same content.
- One top tier of students. This group are taught at a faster pace so that they can study Certificate of Maths.
- In English students will be taught all the same texts.
- All of our students are entered for the higher tier examinations.

- Some of the group sizes may differ in number and the pace is adapted to support the needs of our students

Slide: Core offer: RS

- All of our students study RS whether it is a short course (half a GCSE) or full course (full GCSE).
 - Students go on to perform exceptionally well in this subject and it supports our school's values.
 - The decision to study short course RS and full course RS will impact on the number of GCSEs that your child takes.
 - All students are automatically awarded 2 hours RS.
1. If your child wishes to study full course RS, then your child will have an additional 2 hours of RS to make up the full GCSE and then she will have two periods left over which are allocated as study periods. Your child will study 10 GCSEs in total.
 2. If your child wishes to study short course RS, then your child will have 2 hours of RS allocated allowing your child to select 3 further GCSEs. Your child will study 10.5 GCSEs in total.

Slide: Limited Spaces

- Every year our practical subjects remain very popular, in particular GCSE DT textiles and GCSE food preparation.
- This year, we are able to offer 40 places for our GCSE food preparation course and 20 places for GCSE DT Textiles.
- If your child is considering studying GCSE Textiles or GCSE Food Preparation, then we ask that they prioritise this subject as a subject change request at a later date is unlikely. Places are limited on the grounds of health and safety reasons and capacity.
- In the event one or both of these are oversubscribed, I will meet with all students to check that they still wish to study the subject. If they do then student names go into that and those who are unable to study the subject are put on a waiting list. Priority is given to these students if a space becomes available.

Slide: This is not part of our GCSE options offer

- The Certificate of Further Maths is a level 2 certificate qualification.
- It is not considered a GCSE and it is not required to study A Level Maths and A Level Further Maths. This certificate provides additional challenge for those students who are able to master the skills required at GCSE a lot faster and therefore the additional pressures of studying this extra course is unlikely to impact on their other studies.
- With this in mind, towards the end of this academic year, a small group of students is identified by the staff within the Maths Department. This group is based on the highest performing students with consistently strong outcomes in both Maths and Science which is comparable to their cohort.

Slide: How you can support your child

- We find many students are still unsure what they want to go onto to study for A Levels or Degree. In this instance focusing on what they enjoy and their key strengths is key. For those who do know what they want to study or they have in mind a possible career path, then we would advise that they look at the degree that they may want to study, identify what A Levels may be required and then look at our Sixth Form prospectus to identify which GCSE subjects are required to study particular A Levels.
- Please let your child pick what they want to study and not what you would like to study or think that they should study.
- Can I also recommend that students think very carefully if they are considering studying two practical subjects. Many have a high non-examined element to the course which means that there is a significant time commitment throughout years 10 and 11 to complete practical work.

Filling in the online form

- In the new year, your child and you will receive a letter which outlines how to use our online system to select her choices.
- The good news is that your child will be able to log in up until the deadline and change her options if she wishes to.
- Once the deadline has passed, your child will not be able to change her options.

There are three steps within the online process.

Step 1- As part of your child's core offer, she will need to select the MFL that she wishes to study.

Step 2 your child needs to select her choices.

If she is going to study full course RS, she will select two further options (these will be numbered 2 and 3)

If she is going to study short course RS, she will select three further options (these will be numbered 2,3 and 4)

Short course RS does not need to be selected

The numbering of each subject does not indicate preference.

Careers

Mrs Ivana O'Brien our careers advisor, meets with students in years 11, 12 and 13. She will be available for a limited number of appointments on the parent teacher consultation days should your child be struggling to identify what subjects she wants to study.