

Ref: TOM/CR

11 April 2024

Dear Parents / Carers

**Re: Year 8 Mini Options**

I am writing to advise of the mini options process, about to take place for our current Year 8 cohort moving into Year 9 in September 2024.

There have been significant changes in the Key Stage 4 programmes of study, with a considerable increase in the content students need to cover. With the widespread removal of controlled assessment across a wide range of subjects, students also require different skills to enable them to meet the challenge of GCSE studies. As a school, we feel it is essential all subjects have sufficient time to build the skills necessary to enable successful achievement and attainment at the end of Year 11. For that reason, we have a **limited** subject option choice at the end of Year 8, with the explicit aim of providing more curriculum time for subjects with limited time in Key Stage 3.

To assist with the process, we are asking students to choose **four** subjects from **a possible seven** areas on offer. The aim of the options will be to enable each student to study their chosen subject for three hours per fortnight, rather than two hours. This brings the subjects in line with other subjects on the curriculum like Geography, History and RE. We are also confident, based on student feedback, that enabling limited choice for Year 9 has allowed students to focus on subjects they enjoy and wish to study at a deeper level, in order to make informed choices for their full GCSE programme in February of Year 9.

I need to emphasise the students will **not** start their GCSE programmes of study in these subjects in Year 9. The intention will be to facilitate additional time to give students a more accurate insight into the study skills and learning styles to support their GCSEs, if they choose to pursue the subjects through into Year 10. **It is important to note if a student decides, at the end of Year 9, to choose a subject they had previously dropped in Year 9, this should be possible in the vast majority of subject areas.**

The seven subjects, from which students are required to choose four, are as follows:

- Art;
- Computing;
- Design Technology: Food / Resistant Materials;
- Design Technology: Food / Textiles;
- Design Technology: Resistant Materials /Textiles;
- Drama;
- Music.

Students have traditionally received guidance on the process, via an assembly. This covers what the process involves and some of the considerations students need to bear in mind when making their choices. In summary, the key points covered are as follows:

- Students should think carefully about what THEIR skills and preferences are. Decisions based on friends' choices are not the key priority here;
- When filling in the option form, students need to consider the ORDER of subject carefully. We will try and deliver everyone's full choice list, however we may have to prioritise if we cannot do this. E.g. If we have too many students and not enough staff, we will prioritise choices to maintain suitable class sizes;
- The current Y9 options booklet available from our website [Options Booklet](#), will give students a useful background on the different subjects and what they involve in KS4.

By offering this choice, we aim to offer students an opportunity to deepen their knowledge and understanding of their preferred subjects and by allowing them to focus on these areas, we will ensure students are able to work positively and in an engaged way, in order to prepare for the choices, they will be making six months into Year 9.

In order to confirm the arrangements now required, I would appreciate if you could fill in the attached form for your child and return to school by **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024**.

**Please email the completed form to [options@thomaskeble.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:options@thomaskeble.gloucs.sch.uk) – this will ensure all forms are picked up and processed effectively. Please ensure the subject box on your email includes: Y8 Options, along with your child's name and tutor group. Alternatively, paper copies of the form can be handed in at Reception.**

**Thank you for your support with this important process.**

Yours sincerely



Claire Rossiter  
Assistant Head

## Year 8 Mini Options – April 2024

As you approach the end of Year 8, you are being given the opportunity to make some choices about what you will study in Year 9. The aim is that by choosing 4 subjects to study in Year 9, out of a possible 7 areas of study, you will be able to:

- Spend more time studying your chosen subjects at a deeper level - you will study each of your 4 options for 3 hours per fortnight instead of 2.
- Personalise your timetable a little to gain deeper enjoyment from your learning.

**In order to proceed, you need to choose FOUR options from the following list:**

- Art;
- Computing;
- Drama;
- DT: Food / Textiles;
- DT: Food / Resistant Materials;
- DT: Resistant Materials / Textiles;
- Music.

There is a limit on one DT option from the 3 given above, however do not worry as you will still be able to choose ANY DT subject for KS4.

Please fill in the form below, making sure **you write down your choices in your order of preference.** So, you place your top choice in box number 1 and so on.

You will note there are actually 7 boxes to fill in. This is because we want to be sure of your preference across all 7 subject areas in case we need to prioritise.

Once you have filled in your form, you will need to get a parent to sign to show they agree with your choices. **The deadline for returning your forms is Friday 3rd May 2024.**

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### Year 8 Mini Options - Deadline Friday 3rd May 2024

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tutor Group: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Option Choices (In order of preference)

Choice Order	Option Choice
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	

Parental signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_