

## Year 9 Parent Guide to Supporting Your Child's GCSE Options

### Understanding the Options Process

Now your child is in year 9, they are preparing to make important decisions about their future studies. They will choose **4 options** in addition to the core subjects. These choices will shape their GCSEs and BTecs and help build a foundation for further education and future careers.

Students will need to choose their options from set option blocks - the subjects built into these represent how our school timetable is structured and common combinations of subjects chosen by our students here in recent years. These options blocks will be confirmed to you on 21st November.

### Helping Your Child Make the Right Choices

As a parent, you play a key role in guiding your child towards making informed decisions. Here are some tips on how to support them:

- **Consider their strengths:** Help them think about the subjects they enjoy and are making progress in. These subjects may be more engaging and rewarding for them.
- **Think about future plans:** Discuss what they might want to do after school. Some subjects can lead directly to career paths or further study options, so it's important to choose ones that align with their ambitions. It is also important to consider their pathway to sixth form too, there will be an opportunity to find out about the courses we offer at our Options evening in November.
- **Balance:** Encourage them to pick a balanced mix of subjects. Choosing too many creative or written subjects may limit their options later. A broad selection will keep more doors open.
- **Discuss workload:** Some subjects may require more practical work, while others involve more reading or writing. Ensure they choose subjects that match their learning style.
- **Be realistic:** If they find a subject particularly challenging or haven't enjoyed it in the past, it may be best to avoid it, even if it sounds exciting.
- **Be open minded:** our VTQ courses are new to many people but offer fantastic opportunities. Find out the differences between these types of courses and GCSEs to find what suits your child.

### Important Dates

- **Year 9 Options Evening on 21st November:** Please come along with your child to find out more about the subjects we offer at GCSE and attend one of our talks to find out how the process works.
  
- **Parents' Evening:**
  - We are holding an **online Parents' Evening on 12th December**. This an excellent opportunity to speak with your child's teachers about their progress and any subjects they are considering. If you are unable to get an appointment for a subject you would like to discuss, please email your child's subject teacher directly for feedback.
  
- **Option Submission Window:**
  - The window to submit your child's GCSE choices is **2nd December to 16th December**. You can submit the form through the school website. If you make a mistake on the form please email [options@hccs.info](mailto:options@hccs.info)
  
- **Login Details:**
  - You will receive an email login details to access the form on **2nd December**. Please ensure the school has your most up-to-date email address to avoid any delays. Priority 1 email address will receive the information unless you indicate otherwise by emailing [options@hccs.info](mailto:options@hccs.info)
  
- **Confirmation of choices**
  - In the new year we will start to structure our timetable and put the options classes together based on the information you give us. You will receive confirmation of your child's choices when we have done this but not before.

### Got Questions?

If you have any questions regarding the process or need further information, please don't hesitate to contact us at [options@hccs.info](mailto:options@hccs.info).

Choosing their options is a big step, and with your support, your child can make choices that reflect their skills, interests, and future aspirations. Thank you for working with us during this important time!