

Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form
KS4 information meeting.

26th February 2025.

Lucy Bryant – DHT Curriculum.

AIMS:

- 1.To summarise GCSE and Level 2 qualifications
- 2.To present guidance for parents and carers about progression routes
- 3.To offer guidance about the process and provide any necessary support

GCSE REFORMS – 2017 onwards:

- Grading system with 9 to 1 replacing A* to G
- New and more challenging content
- Removal of controlled assessment for non-practical subjects
- Written examination element in all subjects but art, with various weighting depending on course
- A return to linear examinations with maths, science and languages offering tiered papers (“higher” grades 9 to 4 / “foundation” 5 to 1)

GRADE REFORMS

Old GCSE Grade (no longer used)	New GCSE Grade	OCR Cambridge National Certificate
A*	9	Level 2 Distinction *
	8	
A	7	Level 2 Distinction
B	6	Level 2 Merit
	5	
C	4	Level 2 Pass
D	3	Level 1 Distinction
E		Level 1 Merit
F		Level 1 Pass
G		
U	U	Fail (F)

MAKING INFORMED CHOICES:

1. Before making any decisions, do plenty of research, making sure that you have a wide knowledge of entry requirements for a range of 6th form and post-16 courses.
2. Do your chosen subjects link to potential post-16 plans, post-18 plans and possible career choices?
3. Consider your strengths and what you enjoy.
4. Keep your options open and choose a broad range of subjects.
5. Don't make choices based on friendships or preferred teachers.

Thinking about A levels and BTECs

Many A level and BTECs depend upon you having studied particular subjects at GCSE. In the table below we have set out the 2025/26 entry requirements for our sixth form:

Subject	Minimum entry requirements
Art	4 in Art and 4 English
Biology	6 in Biology and a 6 in one of the other two Sciences (or at least a 6-6 in Combined Sciences), 5 in Maths and 5 English
BTEC Diploma in Business	4 in Maths and 4 average in English is required.
Chemistry	6 in Chemistry and a 6 in one of the other two Sciences (or at least a 6-6 in Combined Sciences), 6 in Maths and 4.5 English
Computer Science	6 in Computer Science and 5 in Maths
Drama & Theatre Studies	5 in Drama and 5 in English
Economics	6 in Maths and 5 in English Literature and English Language
English Literature	A minimum of 5-6 in English Literature and English Language
Film Studies	5 in English Literature
BTEC Extended Certificate Level 3 Digital Film and Video Production	4 in English Language or a 4 in GCSE Film Studies or – for external students – a 4 (or equivalent) in any Media related course (e.g. GCSE Media Studies)
French	5 (preferably 6) in French
Geography	6 in Geography and 4.5 in English
Graphic Communication	5 in Art, Photography, Graphics, Resistant Materials or Textiles
History	6 in History
Mathematics	7 in Maths or 6 with additional support.
Further Maths	7 in Maths (must be studied with A level Maths)
Core Maths	5 in Maths
Music	6 in Music and a highly competent performer on an instrument or singing
Photography	4 in Art, Photography, Graphics or Textiles – 4 in English
Physics	6 in Physics and at least a 6 in one of the other two or 6-6 in Combined Sciences, 6 in Maths and 4.5 average in English
Politics	5 in English Language and a 5 in History, Geography or another humanities subject.
Psychology	5 in Maths, Science and 5 in English Language
Sociology	5 in English Language and preferably a 5 in a Humanities subject
Spanish	5 in Spanish
BTEC Extended Certificate in Sport	4 in PE or L2 Merit in Sport, and 4 in English
BTEC Extended Diploma in Sport	4 in PE or BTEC Sport level 2 pass, and 4 in English
Textiles	5 in Art, Graphics, Resistant Materials or Textiles, and 4.5 in English.
Three-dimensional design	5 in Design and Technology or an Art subject.
EPQ	5 GCSEs 9-4

Progression to university

Our sixth form students go on to study at a wide array of universities, including University of Oxford and University of Cambridge, as well as art schools like UAL, and other prestigious London universities like LSE. We have also had students go on to study abroad at institutions such as Harvard.

We pride ourselves on ensuring we offer a broad and balanced programme that enables students to make informed decisions on next steps, which has resulted in students not only progressing to university but also onto apprenticeships, and Art Foundation courses. The key is to keep your options open by getting the best GCSE grades possible. Then, at sixth form, choose A levels or BTECs that are applicable to anything you want to do in future and seek to enjoy your learning.

It is very important that you check that the A level choices you make facilitate you being able to do any degree you might want to do. For example, if you want to do medicine you need to study Chemistry. For more detailed information please look at the Russell Group's Informed Choices website: www.informedchoices.ac.uk

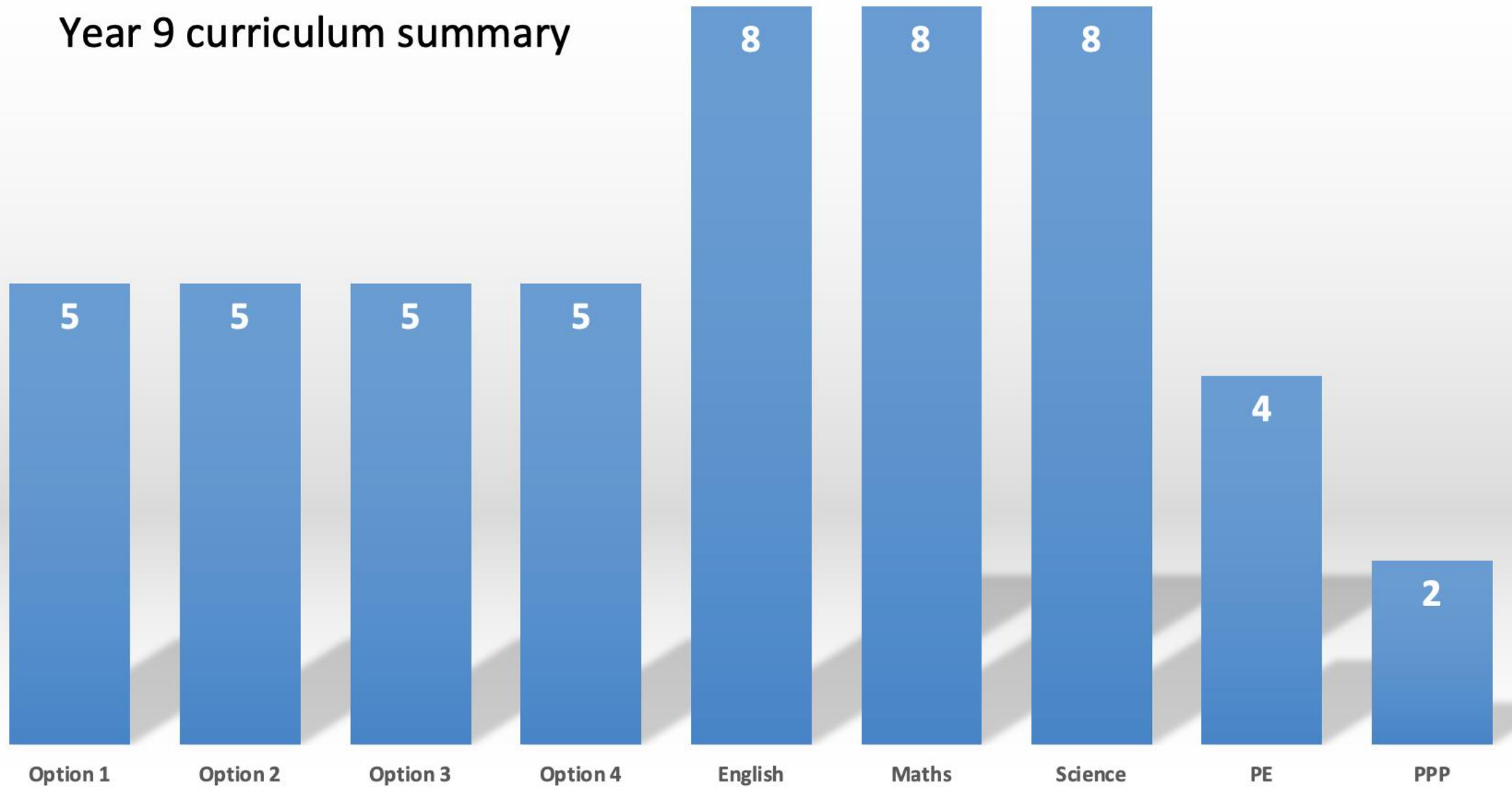
Science A levels can be studied with combined science GCSEs as long as at least 6-5 is attained. To find out more about university you can use these guides:

- www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk
- www.theguardian.com/education/universityguide
- www.independent.co.uk/student/into-university/az-uni-colleges

Qualifications ladder

Levels	Academic general qualifications	Vocational qualifications - work ready qualifications	Work based/skills qualifications
5	Honours degree		
4	Degree	Higher National Diploma Higher National Certificate Higher Level Apprenticeship	Foundation degree NVQ 4
3	A level GCSE	BTEC nationals Award, cert & diplomas Short courses	NVQ 3
		Advanced apprenticeship	
2	GCSE 9-4	BTEC firsts Diplomas & certificates Short courses	NVQ 2 Work skills
		Apprenticeship	
1	GCSE 3-1	BTEC introductory Diplomas & certificates Short courses	NVQ 1 ESOL Work skills

Year 9 curriculum summary



CORE

English Language
English Literature
Mathematics
Combined Science (2 GCSEs)

Compulsory to choose at least one

Computer Science
French
Geography
History
Spanish

Optional - maximum 3 subjects

Art
Art and Design: Textiles specialism
Business Studies
Citizenship
Creative iMedia L2
Design & Technology: Graphics
Design & Technology: Product Design
Drama
Film Studies
Hospitality and Catering L2
Music
Photography
Physical Education
Religious Studies
Triple Science

Every student will study the Core GCSE subjects, 5 GCSE qualifications in total, alongside PPP / Personal Development and P.E.

Students will be asked to choose 4 additional subjects.

Students must choose ***at least one*** of the compulsory green subjects and may choose more. If choosing a language, it must be the language studied in years 7 and 8.

Students may not choose either of the following combinations:

- Art and Design ***and*** Art and Design: Textiles Specialism
- Design & Technology: Graphics ***and*** Design & Technology: Product Design

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
French	French	Geography	French
Geography	Geography	History	Geography
History	History	Spanish	History
Spanish		Computer Science	Spanish
Art	Citizenship	Art	Art
Art and Design: Textiles specialism	Design & Technology: Graphics	Drama	Business Studies
Citizenship	Drama	Music	Citizenship
Drama	Film Studies	PE	Design & Technology: Product Design
Design & Technology: Product Design	Photography	Photography	Hospitality and Catering L2
Music	Physical Education	Religious Studies	Music
Photography	Triple Science	Creative iMedia	

If choosing a language, it must be the language studied in years 7 and 8.

You may not choose any of the following combinations of subjects:

1. GCSE Art and GCSE Art and Design: Textiles Specialism.
2. GCSE Design and Technology: Product Design and GCSE Design and Technology: Graphics

Block 1 choice	Block 2 choice	Block 3 choice	Block 4 choice
HISTORY	TRIPLE SCIENCE	COMPUTER SCIENCE	MUSIC

Choose three different back-up subjects and write them in the boxes below:

- These will be used if, for any reason, one of your first-choice subjects does not run or is oversubscribed
- You should place them in order of how much you would like to do them
- They can be from any block but not subjects that you have already chosen above

1st	ART	2nd	GEOGRAPHY	3 rd	CITIZENSHIP
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Name:

Tutor group:

We will do our utmost to fit all students into their preferred choices, but this cannot be guaranteed. This is why we ask students to provide three back-up choices, in rank order, and not subjects chosen in the main four boxes. Where we are unable to allocate a first choice, we will work down the rank order list and allocate to the first available subject.

The reasons a student may not get their first choice include:

- 1. Insufficient numbers for the class to run** – too few students have opted for the subject. If the subject is being run in another block, we will look to move block choices to accommodate. If it is not, then we will use the back-up choices.
- 2. Oversubscription** – too many students have opted for the subject. The number of spaces in each subject is decided using the maximum class sizes set by the head teacher and governors. Practical and computing subjects will have smaller class sizes than other subjects. When there are too many students opting for the number of spaces available, students with an EHCP are allocated first and then remaining students are randomly selected from all those who requested the subject. Where students are not selected, we will use their back-up choices. All students have an equal right to be selected, and we do not use attainment or behaviour to decide. The random selection process is overseen by two senior members of staff to ensure fairness.
- 3. Unforeseen staffing changes** - rarely, a staffing change may mean that a subject must be withdrawn from the option blocks. If this happens, we will use back-up choices.
- 4. Late return of options form** - if we do not receive an options form by the deadline published on the website (21st March), a first choice cannot be considered if it is for an oversubscribed subject and back-up choices will be used.

Date	Focus
Week beginning 13 th January	Communication to parents & carers outlining process and key dates
Friday 7 th February	Deadline for Heads of Subject to confirm content for options booklet
Weeks beginning 10 th and 24 th February	Heads of option subjects to present at registration time via Teams
Week beginning 24 th February to 28 th February	15-minute 1:1 options and careers guidance meeting for all year 8 students
26 th February	Year 8 options evening
5 th March	Year 8 parents' and carers' evening
6 th March	Email online options form to parents and carers
21 st March	Deadline for completed form submission
Week beginning 23 rd June	Letters confirming allocated subjects to parents and carers

<https://www.stokenewingtonschool.co.uk/learning/ks4-options>