



2026-2028

OATHALL

KS4 OPTIONS BOOKLET



“Oathall is committed to promoting respect, aspiration, achievement and enjoyment in a supportive environment.”



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WELCOME MESSAGE



Making GCSE choices involves reducing the range of subjects studied in order to study some in more depth. This is the start of a process that will continue throughout an individual's education and it is an important opportunity to give serious thought about interests and talents. This booklet will help parents and carers understand the GCSE curriculum at Oathall.

It contains information about the core curriculum, the subjects that we expect everyone to study – and the options available to an individual pupil at this stage in their education and beyond. We hope that you will find it useful as a basis for discussion with your child, and that it will allow you to help them find a combination of subjects that will enthuse and inspire them next year.

The design of the curriculum at all levels, including GCSE is underpinned by the following principles. A curriculum that:

- remains as broad and balanced as possible for all students
- is driven by high expectations for all
- clearly sets out the knowledge and skills that will be acquired
- develops strong literacy and numeracy skills so that students can communicate confidently
- places an importance on learning independently
- is planned, structured and sequenced so that knowledge is learnt securely and reinforced over time
- is adapted for students with special educational needs and / or disabilities
- promotes practical competency within each subject
- opens students' minds to their possible futures
- provides enriching experiences that contribute to building character and cultural experiences.

Mr Houghton
Headteacher





MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR YOU

The time has arrived for you to start making some decisions about your next two years at Oathall and the subjects you would like to study. You are required to take certain subjects in the core curriculum, but this is your opportunity to choose other subjects that interest you and will support your preferred progression route and learning style. The following information will allow you to make informed decisions. Remember to follow the instructions carefully and take your time, ask as many questions and seek as much advice as you need in order to ensure the choices you make are the right ones for you. Faculties have provided an outline of each subject, highlighting the content and assessment model. There is also a brief video to support your decision making.

KEY DATES:

- **3rd February** - Extended Learning Day, Option taster
- **26th February** - Options Evening
- **5th March** - Year 9 Parents Evening
- **Monday 9th March** - BROMCOM option form opens
- **Friday 20th March** - BROMCOM option form closes



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who chooses the courses?

The final decision is made by students with their parents, within the limits set out in this booklet.

Who can help make the choices?

Your group tutor and Head of Year will be able to offer you advice and guidance. The staff have produced information sheets giving details of the courses available. These are on the website. Subject teachers can talk to you about your suitability for the course. The online Parents' Evening provides this opportunity. The careers guidance practitioner can advise you on details of different areas of work and post-16 courses.

Which qualifications must be taken?

Students must take English, Mathematics and Science. Most students must also take a language and either geography or history.

How do students choose subjects that are right for them?

DO

- Find out exactly what each course involves and decide whether you are well suited to cope with the demands of the subject.
- Think about how much you enjoy the subject.
- Find out about the entry requirements of post-16 courses and areas of employment that interest you.
- Be careful not to close any doors at this stage because you may need certain skills and qualifications at a later stage.
- Ensure you have a good balance in your subjects.

DON'T choose a subject because:

- Your friend is doing it.
- You like the teacher. You may well have a different teacher at Key Stage 4.
- You think it will be easy.

Can a student change their mind later?

Only in exceptional circumstances are students allowed to make a change to their subjects once Year 10 has started. Take the time and effort to make the best choices at this stage.

Do courses that are listed in this booklet sometimes not run?

Yes. We cannot run a course that has very few students choosing it. If it is not possible to allocate a student a subject they have chosen the reserve choice will be used.

TYPES OF QUALIFICATION



The qualifications on offer fall into two categories: GCSE and non-GCSE qualifications. Both types of qualifications offer the same range of outcomes but they are reported using different grading systems. They can be taken alongside each other so it is perfectly acceptable for a student to select some GCSE and some non-GCSE subjects. The most important factor to consider is how well suited the student is to the type of learning and assessment involved in any qualification. All the qualifications on offer are approved for 14 to 16 year old students and carry the same weighting, that is to say they have the same recommended number of hours of study time.

GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education) These qualifications are graded on a scale from 1 to 9, with 9 being the highest grade. Almost all GCSE qualifications are assessed using only examinations at the end of Year 11, although a few of the subjects have a small amount of non-examination assessment. The subject pages and videos available on the Oathall website give the details. Some A level subjects require a certain grade in a specified GCSE subjects so it is worth checking the A level entry requirement with the specific post-16 college or school.

Non-GCSE qualifications These include the BTEC, WJEC and Cambridge National qualifications. They take a more practical approach to learning compared with GCSEs without missing out on the important theory aspects of the subject. The assessment is based largely on evidence that the students produce to demonstrate they have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge. There is an examination in each subject but this accounts for a much smaller proportion of the final grade than with GCSEs. They are recognised by colleges and employers as equivalent qualifications to GCSEs. They cover the same range of standards as GCSE grades 1 to 9 but are reported using different grading systems. It is perfectly acceptable to follow a combination of these and GCSE subjects. Experience of these courses can help support progress onto vocational courses post-16 but will also provide a route to A levels provided the specific entry requirements are met.

KEY STAGE 4 PROVISION

Key Stage 4 Provision Here are the different courses and qualifications that you can study. All students will take the following core subjects:

Core subjects	Qualification
English Language	GCSE
English Literature	GCSE
Mathematics (Further Maths for some students)	GCSE
Science	GCSE

Note: Allocation to Further Maths and double or triple science is managed later in the year. Students will also take courses from the following list:

Other subjects	Qualification
Art	GCSE
Business Studies	GCSE
Computer Science	GCSE
Design Technology - Resistant Materials	GCSE
Drama	GCSE
French	GCSE
Geography	GCSE
German	GCSE



History	GCSE
Music	GCSE
Photography	GCSE
Physical Education	GCSE
Psychology	GCSE
Religious Studies	GCSE
Spanish	GCSE
Textiles	GCSE
Animal Care	BTEC Level 1 & 2
Child Development	Cambridge National Level 1 & 2
Engineering	Cambridge National Level 1 & 2
Health and Social Care	BTEC Level 1 & 2
Hospitality and Catering	WJEC Level 1 & 2
Performing Arts - Dance	BTEC Level 1 & 2
Sports Studies	Cambridge National Level 1 & 2

The Options Process

There are 2 possible pathways to follow when making the option choices. The pathway that a student will follow is determined by the school. Please look at the table below and then read the notes that follow.

Languages	Humanities	GCSEs unless indicated in brackets
French German Spanish	Geography History	Animal Care (BTEC) Art Business Studies Computer Science Child Development (Cambridge National) Design Technology - Resistant Materials Drama Engineering Geography Health and Social Care (BTEC) History Hospitality and Catering (WJEC) Music Performing Arts - Dance (BTEC) Photography Physical Education Sports Studies (Cambridge National) Psychology Religious Studies Textiles

Pathway A

The majority of students will follow pathway A. They will:

- Continue with the language they are studying in Year 9. Year 9 dual linguists (those learning Italian this year) can continue with both languages or just one.
- Select either geography or history.
- Select two subjects from the other qualification and one reserve subjects. Please give careful thought to the reserve subject because they may have to be allocated for reasons given earlier in the booklet.

If a student wants to study both Geography and History they can select both, one in the humanities block and one in the free choice block.

Pathway B

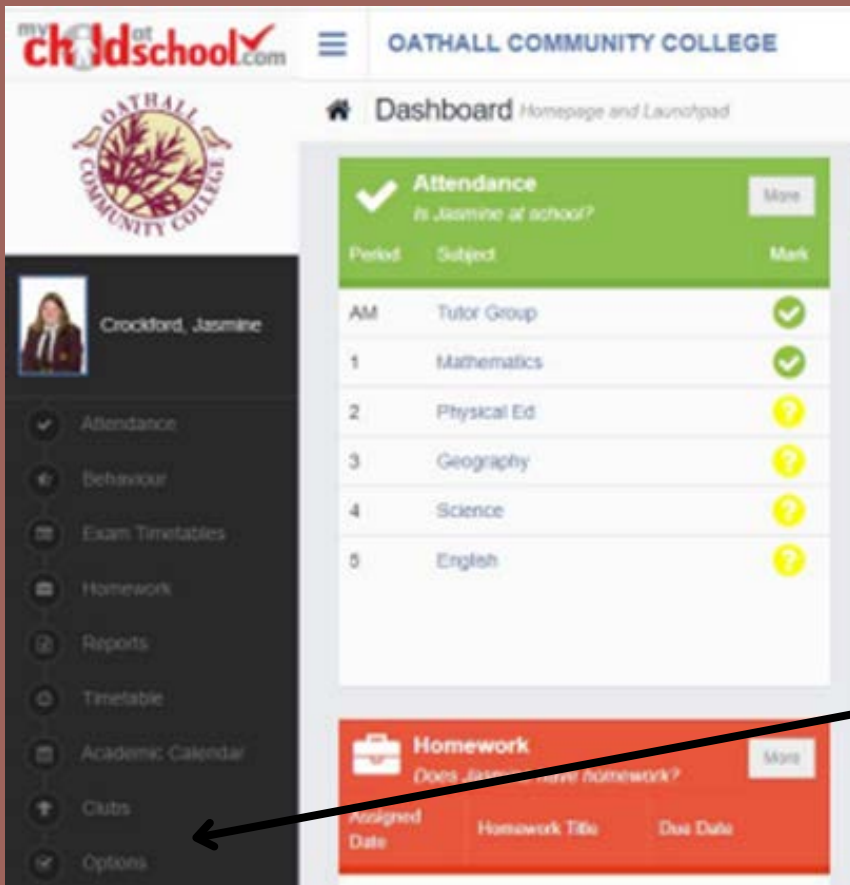
Some students will not be required to take a language subject. Parents will be written to informing them of this pathway. They will:

- Select either geography or history.
- Select three subjects from the other subjects list and one reserve subject. Please give very careful thought to the reserve subject because this may have to be allocated for reasons given earlier on in the booklet.

A student following pathway B may select the language they have been learning in Year 9 if they want to but they do not have to.

If a student wants to study both Geography and History, they can.

Using MCAS (BROMCOM Parent Portal) to complete the form



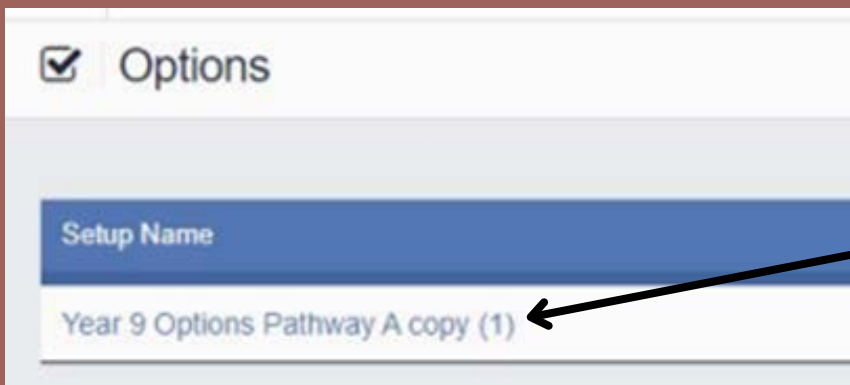
Parents submit the option choices on MCAS. This must be on the website, not the phone app. There is a link on the Oathall homepage.

If you have any problems using MCAS to submit options, please contact Mrs Patch, mpatch@oathall.org

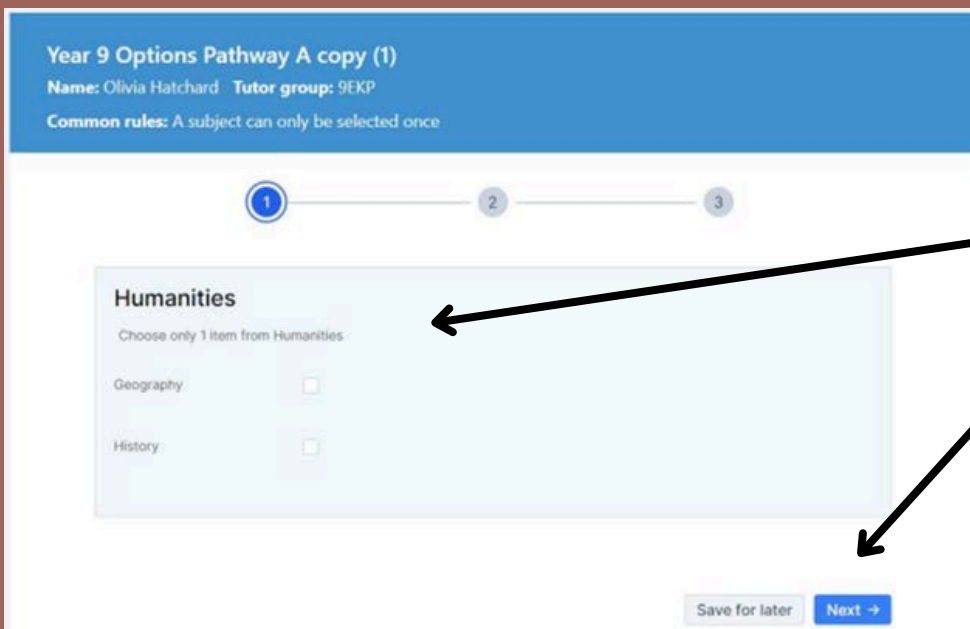
The Options facility on MCAS will open on Monday 9th March and close on Friday 20th March.

☐ Login into MCAS

☐ Select Options from the menu (you may need to scroll down)



☐ Select the Y9 Options



☐ Select the Humanities subject

☐ Select Next

Free choice

Pick 2 choices from Free choice • Choose maximum 1 reserve subjects from Group Free choice

- 3D Design Reserve
- Animal Care Reserve
- Art & Design Reserve
- Business 5 Reserve
- Child Development Reserve
- Computer Studies Reserve
- Reserve
- Drama Reserve
- Engineering Reserve
- Food Tech Reserve
- Geography Reserve
- Health and Social Care Reserve
- History Reserve
- Music Reserve
- PE/GCSE Reserve
- Photography Reserve
- Psychology Reserve
- Religious Studies Reserve
- Sport Tech Award Reserve

Previous Save for later Next

Select 2 free choice subjects

Select a reserve

Select Next

Dual language students will also have the opportunity to select 1 or 2 languages.

Humanities [Edit](#)

Geography


Free choice [Edit](#)

Food Tech, Health and Social Care, Reserved: Engineering

A form can only be submitted once and can't be changed later. If you would like to modify it, use the Save for later button.

Previous Save for later **Submit**

Use Edit to make any changes and select Submit. You will then see a confirmation.

 Thank you!

Your choices have been submitted and are ready for review by the school.

If you would like to change your choices, please speak to the school.

Close Tab

Checklist (for parents and students)

Make sure you have:

- taken the time to find out everything you need to about the courses on offer before making your choices,
- had online appointments with subject teachers,
- included a reserve choice,
- not selected the same subject more than once,
- completed the options process in MCAS by Friday 14 March.

Thank you

