



# Welcome to Simon Balle All-through School Preferences Evening

Monday 31st January 2022

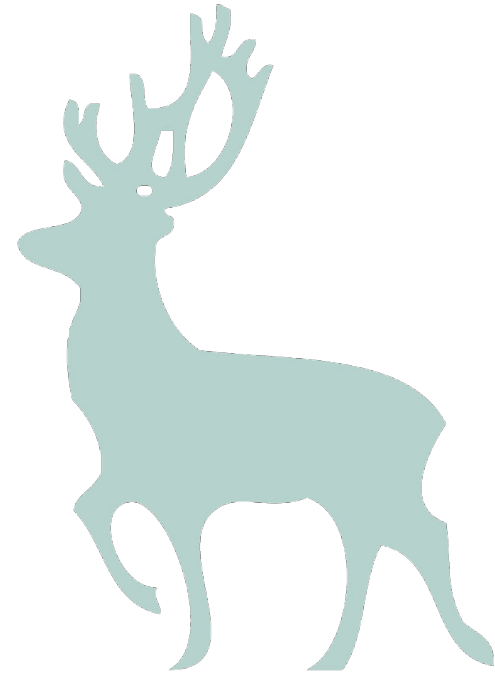
**Please do not move tables or chairs as they are laid out for the Y11 mock exams. We wanted to hold this meeting in person and the arrangement does actually help with social distancing!**





# Health and Safety & general notices

- **Welcome**
- **Toilets**
- **If there is a fire**
- **Who is involved tonight**





# Aims of the evening

- To outline the preferences process
- To help you to support your child to make an informed decision
- To examine what should influence choices
- To share key dates
- To give you an opportunity to contact us with any questions





# Some throwbacks!





# Some throwbacks!





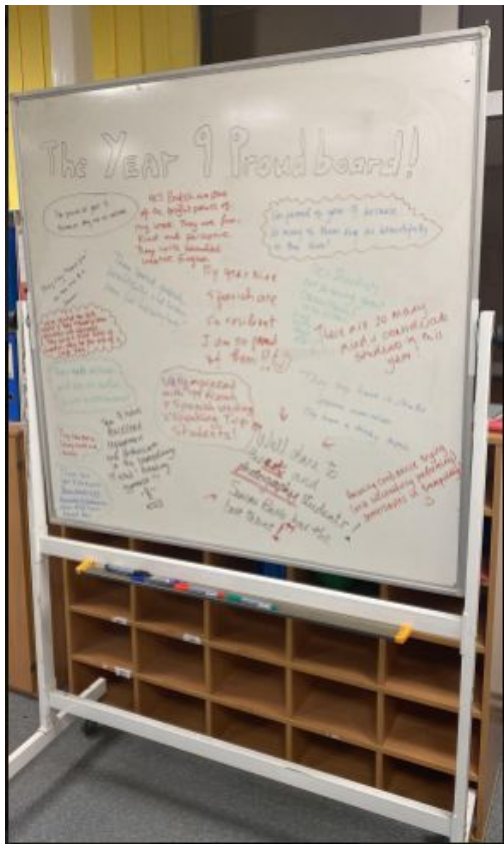


# Some throwbacks!

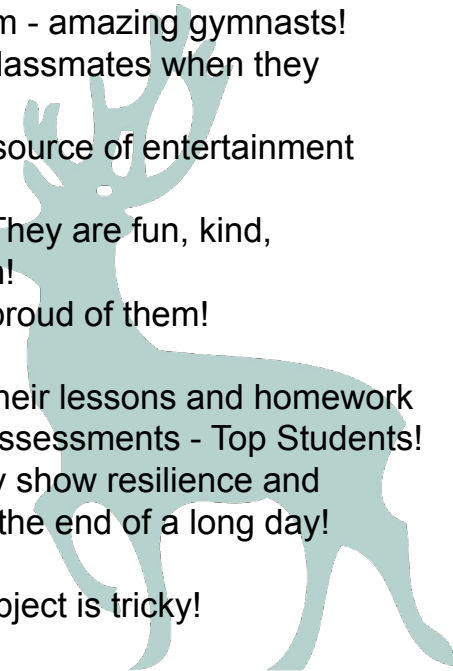




# Some highlights - The Proud Board!



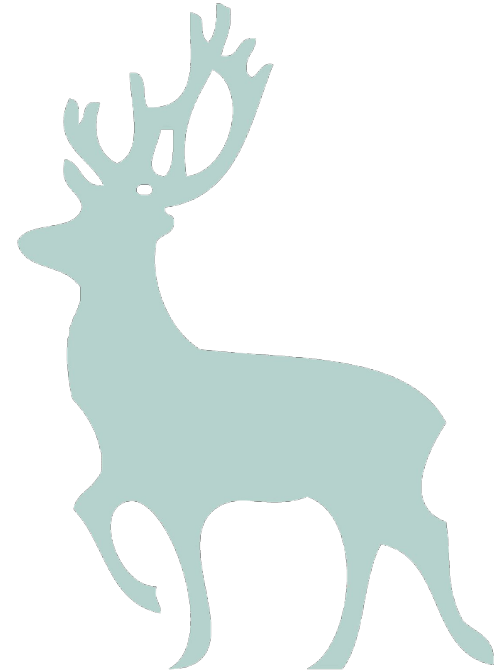
- I'm proud of year 9 because they are so resilient!
- There are so many kind and considerate student in Year 9!
- Amazing confidence trying and successfully performing somersaults in trampolining
- Well done to the art and photography students - Simon Balle has the best talent!
- Year 9 have excellent engagement and enthusiasm - amazing gymnasts!
- I have seen Year 9 show such kindness towards classmates when they needed help
- They make me laugh and provide me an endless source of entertainment
- They say 'thank you' at the end of lessons
- 9C5 English are on the bright points of my week. They are fun, kind, perceptive and they right beautiful creative English!
- My Year 9 Spanish class are so resilient, I am so proud of them!
- So many of them sing so beautifully in the choir!
- 9C1 Scientists are showing great commitment in their lessons and homework
- Very impressed with Year 9 French and Spanish assessments - Top Students!
- We've started the GCSE course and they regularly show resilience and aspiration. They bring a great sense of humour at the end of a long day!
- They take place in library events and quizzes!
- They try hard in Maths lessons, even when the subject is tricky!



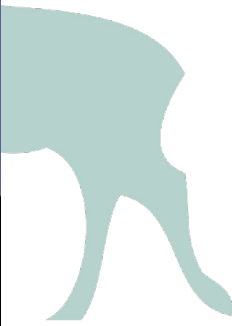


# Opportunities

- **Farm leaders**
- **Duke of Edinburgh Award**
- **Theatre Trip**
- **Enrichment leaders**



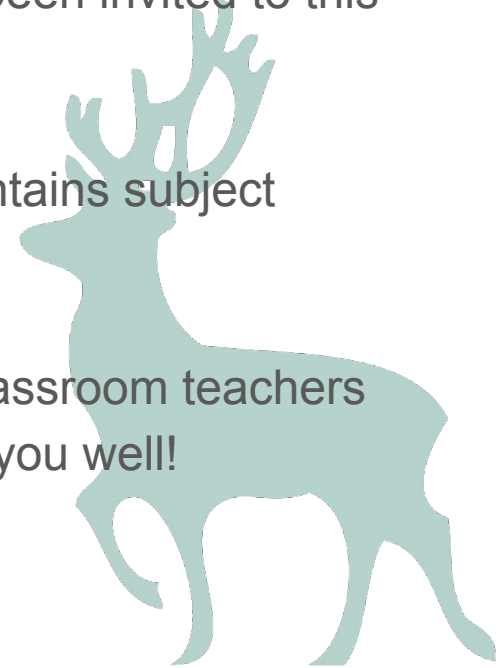






# Guidance in school

- ❑ **Subject videos** - All subjects have produced videos about their subjects at KS4 to give students more information. All students have been invited to this google classroom and can access these videos
- ❑ **Preference booklet** - This will be shared with you and contains subject information
- ❑ **Classroom teachers** - don't be afraid to speak to your classroom teachers and ask their advice. They are the experts and they know you well!





# Preference process

- ❑ **Students will be sent a google form** at the end of the day on Tuesday 1st Feb or early on Weds morning, by this time all videos would have been shown in form time.
- ❑ **Deadline to submit is Thursday 10th Feb.**
- ❑ **Compulsory Examined subjects:** English Language and English Literature, Maths and Science (everyone does at least combined science).
- ❑ **Compulsory Non examined subjects:** 'Physical Education' and 'Culture, Society & Ethics' you do not need to choose these subjects.
- ❑ **Students are expected to take a Humanities subject (Geography/History)**
- ❑ **In addition**, we expect the majority of students to also study either French or Spanish; this will be dependent upon your progress so far.
- ❑ **All students** will receive an email outlining the expectations for them alongside a link to the google form which needs to be submitted.



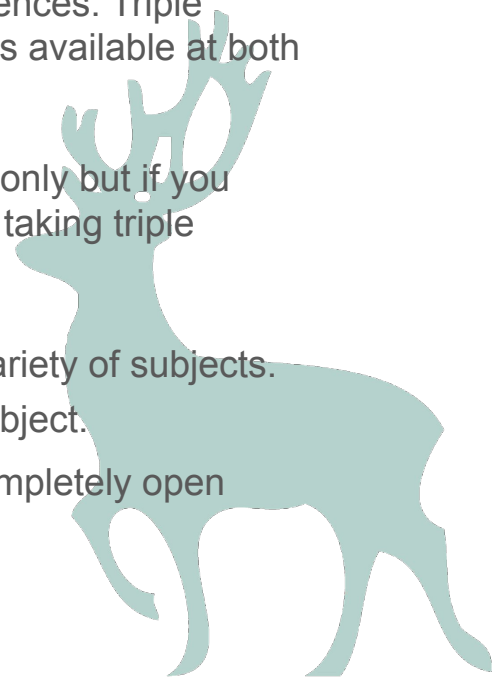


# Preferences information

- ❑ **Science** - everyone takes at least combined (double) science which means that they study all three sciences and gain two GCSEs in science. By taking triple science you are expanding this to three GCSEs hence why you would select this as one of your preferences. Triple science is for those students who see sciences as a strength of theirs and is available at both foundation and higher tiers.

You are still able to go onto science A levels from taking combined science only but if you were to be looking at more than one science at A Level then you should be taking triple science.

- ❑ **Other Preferences:** Students are then able to select preferences from a variety of subjects. On the form we ask you to include a reason why they have selected this subject.
- ❑ It is very important that students understand that for many there is not a completely open option, rather they have preferences.

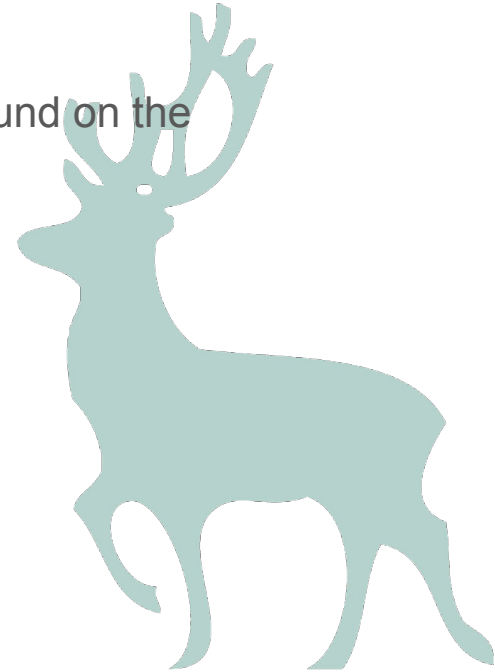




# Other guidance

To ensure the right choice is made you may also want to consider:

- Go4schools data and reports
- Looking at exam board subject websites
- Speaking to older students
- Reading the '**Year 9 Preferences Booklet 2022**' which can be found on the school website
- Requesting a Connexions interview
- Ask a question via the specific email address [y9preferences@simonballe.herts.sch.uk](mailto:y9preferences@simonballe.herts.sch.uk)







# Things to consider

Preferences should be broad and balanced and we will question the suitability of choices if we feel they narrow the focus too much for a student.

We also may have to reconsider these initial selections, if for any reason the school can not timetable them in September or the subject is oversubscribed.

Select subjects that you enjoy and will help you progress to the next stage of your education not just what your friends are choosing

Think about where you might be heading (Sixth form, college, apprenticeship)

**Keep doors open**





# Next Steps

Think about and discuss your preferences at home.

Students must submit the google form using their school email address by **Monday 21st February** note this change based on thoughts after the evening this is the Monday after half term.

We have set up a specific email address to answer question on these choices. **[y9preferences@simonballe.herts.sch.uk](mailto:y9preferences@simonballe.herts.sch.uk)**

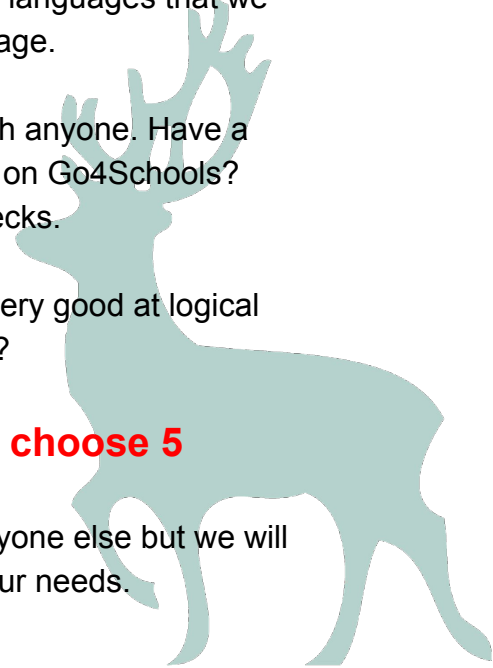
We will answer emails up to half term (12th Feb) within 24 hours but any in half term will take longer. If we are unable to answer your questions via email, then we may suggest a meeting or phone call after half term. Similarly, we will be in contact with you if we feel that the pathway chosen is not the most suitable.





# Frequently asked questions

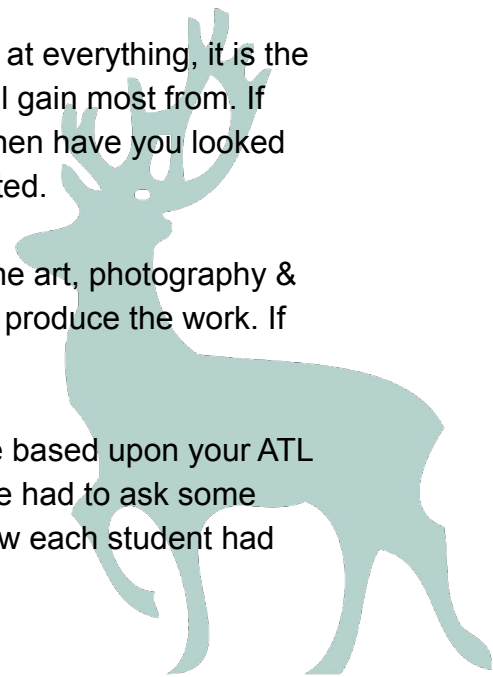
- **Do I have to take a language?** We do not insist but strongly encourage, if able, all students to consider taking a language. Look at your options, do they seem balanced without a language? Have you read the information on the link within the booklet about choices of subject? In a similar way to why we insist that students take a humanities subject, it is the method/style of learning and assessment in languages that we feel gives a better balance. For many we have set the default as you must take a language.
- **Are my choices okay?** You should be able to justify your choices when discussing with anyone. Have a think about what is your likely pathway into the sixth form. Have you checked your data on Go4Schools? Look at the checklist at the bottom of the google form that you will submit for further checks.
- **I want to do Computer Science as I like computers, is that okay?** You need to be very good at logical thinking and hence Maths. Is your mathematical ability high enough to take this subject?
- **I want to choose 5 as I can't decide between them. What do I do?** **You can't choose 5**
- **I have additional needs, do I get a free choice?** You will have the same form as everyone else but we will invite you and your parents into school to discuss whether your choices will best suit your needs.





# Frequently asked questions

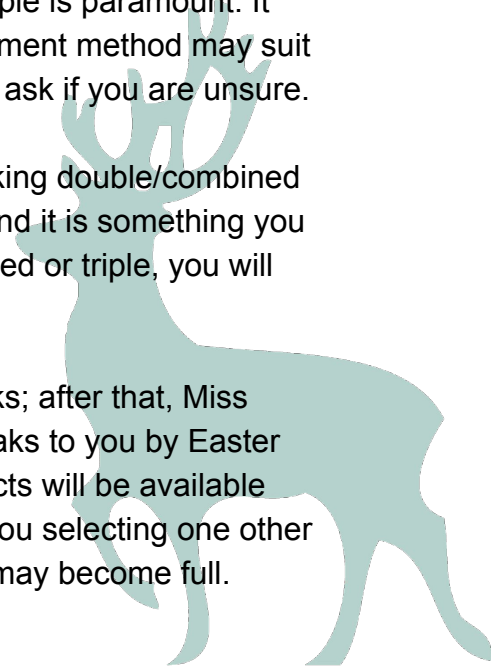
- **I want to take Business as I want to work in a business when I am older and if I want to take it at A level I need a GCSE in it, is this right?** No, you can take Business Studies at A level without taking it at GCSE. Students should talk to someone about Business Studies before choosing it. It is not just an easy option. Speak to Mr Pooley, Mr Klippel or Mr Quirk if you want to know more about the subject
- **I am not very good at anything, what shall I choose?** As with someone who is good at everything, it is the subjects that you enjoy or work best in and have already shown a good ATL that you will gain most from. If you feel that you will not reach the criteria to take specific subjects at Level 3 (A level) then have you looked at college courses and seeing what they need for anything in which you may be interested.
- **I like art so why can't I take more than one of those subjects for my subjects?** Fine art, photography & graphics, 3D design and textiles **are all the same GCSE** but with a different medium to produce the work. If you had two of them you would effectively be taking a subject twice.
- **What if the subject I choose is full, will I get a place?** This decision will be made based upon your ATL not attainment. Last year there were **three subjects that were oversubscribed** and we had to ask some people to change one preference. To make that decision, teachers took into account how each student had worked in class and their commitment to the subject.





# Frequently asked questions

- **I like this subject, but only want to take it if I am taught by a certain teacher?** We have not planned out who is taking particular classes so **do not** choose a subject based upon a teacher you like.
- **Why would I take Health and Social care unless I want to be a Doctor or a Midwife?** Health and Social care is a subject that looks at skills of people who work in a job where dealing with people is paramount. It also involves 50% of the work being completed using coursework so this sort of assessment method may suit you. The other vocational course is OCR Sport which also includes coursework, please ask if you are unsure.
- **So if I take triple science does that count as one of my preferences?** **Yes** taking double/combined science does not take up one of your options. If science is an area of strength for you and it is something you enjoy then triple/combined science should be one of your preferences. For both combined or triple, you will study all three sciences.
- **How will I know if I have a clash?** It will take us a few weeks to work out option blocks; after that, Miss Ahmet or Mr Klippel will approach you but that will be well after half term. If no-one speaks to you by Easter then you can assume that your choices are fine. We can never guarantee that all subjects will be available until we know our staffing later in the year. **If you do have a clash**, it will be a case of you selecting one other subject and we will then give you priority over others if you are selecting a subject that may become full.



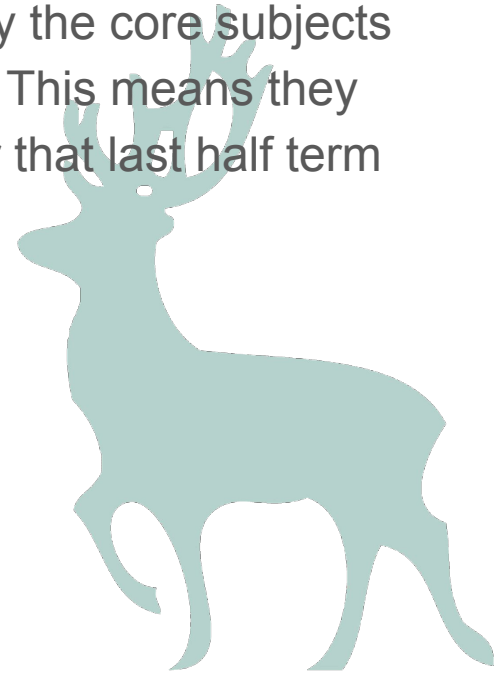




# When do these options start?

This wasn't mentioned at the evening, sorry I forgot!

We will aim to change the timetable and students will only study the core subjects and their options **from the start of the last half term in June**. This means they start their GCSEs at this point and really gives them a focus for that last half term of the year.





# Option blocks 2021

- These were the blocks for LAST year. **This year's blocks will be based on what you choose**, we do not follow a set structure.

Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Geography	Geography	Geography	Geography
History	History	Business St	History
French	Business St	Catering	French
Spanish	Fine Art	3D Design	Spanish
Health and Social care	Art Textiles	PRE	Sports St (3 gps)
Drama	3D Design	Triple Science	Triple Science
Computer Science	Photography & Graphics	Computer Science	
		Music	