

Welcome to 2024 options evening

Mr Haywood
Vice Principal



Reading Girls' School

Going even further together



Information evening

This will be the first time our students are able to take control of a significant part of your curriculum.

As they go through to further and higher education, they will have increasingly more control over the educational path they choose.

With this in mind, it is important that they make thoughtful and informed choices for their GCSE options.



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Key Events

To help you with choices, we have put together a GCSE taster schedule of activities.

Taster Lessons to experience an introductory KS4 style lesson in each of their options subjects. Business led theirs through our tutor program

Speed Dating for an opportunity to speak to current Year 10 about their experiences of the subjects that they have been studying for the two last years



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Why we do this now

Students will study their courses over 3 Years, the reason for this is 2-fold:

1. We operate a broad and balanced curriculum which ensures that they don't miss out of learning in KS3 (Years 7&8)
2. With the current GCSE style there is a huge emphasis on terminal exams at the end of the course. With a 3-year KS4, they have the opportunity to revisit topics and deepen their knowledge to give them the best opportunities in the terminal exams and in non-GCSE subjects. This allows time to deepen understanding and spread out the assessment



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How we do it

In year 9 students will study the following:

Lessons (every two weeks)	Subject
9	English (inc Language and Literature
9	Maths
12	Biology, Physics and Chemistry
2	Core PE
1 each	RS and PSHE
4	Option A
4	Option B
4	Option C
4	Option D



Year 9

Lessons (every two weeks)	Subject
9	English (inc Language and Literature
9	Maths
12	Biology, Physics and Chemistry
2	Core PE
1 each	RS and PSHE
4	Option A
4	Option B
4	Option C
4	Option D

Year 10 & 11

Lessons (every two weeks)	Subject
8	English (inc Language and Literature
8	Maths
10	Biology, Physics and Chemistry
2	Core PE
1 each	RS and PSHE
5	Option A
5	Option B
5	Option C
5	Option D



1. What if I want to take more or less than 4 subjects?

Students have to take 4 subjects in order to have a full timetable; we allow four choices to give a broad and balanced curriculum without overloading students.

2. What if there is a subject I want to study not in the list?

At KS4, these are the subjects we offer as a school, there are more subjects offered at 6th form but you do not have to study these at KS4 in order to progress onto them at 6th form.

3. What if I can't take the subjects I want to as they are in the same option block?

a. Despite our best efforts, we cannot offer an infinite combination of subjects, the blocks are built upon teachers' availability and unfortunately, there is no movement in this.



4. Why do I need a reserve?

As always planning for next year, somethings are out of our control and in the event a subject cannot run or is oversubscribed, we may need to look at students' 2nd choices

5. What if the subject I want to do is oversubscribed?

Sometimes, there are too many students on a course, and we cannot safely deliver the lessons, when this happens, we will speak to the teacher of the subject and all the students affected and will use some student's reserve choices.

6. What if I change my mind?

We hope that this won't happen, however, if it does, we will need a signed letter from parent's and you will need to attend a meeting with Mr. Haywood in order to discuss the options available to you. We do not make student-led changes January in yr9



FAQs

7. Do I have to study the core subjects?

Yes, this is a statutory requirement from the government, they also provide you with the foundations that you need for later life and are the subjects that you need to get into 6th form or college.

8. What is the difference between GCSEs, BTECs, NCFEs and the other courses?

In short, nothing, we ensure that all providers at further education accept our courses and they are equivalent to GCSEs. The main differences are that GCSEs are 100% exam based (at the end of year 11) and the vocational awards require coursework and controlled assessment throughout the 2 years



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2024: Options process: Timetable

Date	Event	
22nd February	Year 8 options assembly	Introductory presentation outlining the options process and information about how to make sensible GCSE choices.
11th to 22nd March	GCSE taster sessions	Your subject teachers will deliver presentations in class outlining the content and structure of each GCSE options course. Your teachers will also deliver GCSE style lessons in each options subject area. This will give you a flavour of GCSE lessons.
14th March	Year 8 / Year 9 speed dating	Year 9 students will be able to share with you their experience of making options choices last year.
14th March	Options evening	An opportunity for your parents to meet GCSE options teachers and to discuss the courses and curriculums.
18th March	Students receive options forms	You will receive your options forms. These must be filled in and returned by the 27th March
25th March	Students return options forms	Your options forms must be handed in to your Head of Year
26th April	Confirmation of options choices	You will be informed about your final GCSE options choices

Do's and Don'ts

Do not choose a subject because a friend is doing it.

Do choose subjects which they enjoy and feel confident in.

Do not choose a subject because of the year 8 teacher.

Do choose a subject based upon strengths and where they might see themselves in the future.

Do not choose subjects based upon small differences in attainment in year 8. You have a fresh start again in all GCSE subjects.



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An example of the option forms (subjects may change)

Section 1	Ebacc block
Please choose just 1 from this option block. You will get the opportunity to choose more of these in the next block.	
French	
Spanish	
Geography	
History	
Computer Science	

Section 2	Open block				
Please choose 3 from this option block. Please note you can't choose both Art and Design and Textiles-Art					
French		Art and Design		Music	
Spanish		Drama		Textiles art	
Geography		Dance		Food and Nutrition	
History		Health and Fitness		Creative I-Media	
Computer Science		Religious Studies		Business	

Section 3	Reserves
Please choose two reserves from section 2 in order of preference.	
Reserve No 1	
Reserve No 2	

Signature	Date	
Parent		
Student		



Example of completed options Form

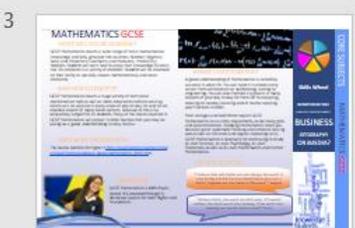
Section 1	Ebacc block
Please choose just 1 from this option block. You will get the opportunity to choose more of these in the next block	
French	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spanish	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Geography	<input type="checkbox"/>
History	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer Science	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 2		Open block			
Please choose 3 from this option block. Please note you can't choose both Art and Design and Textiles-Art					
French	<input type="checkbox"/>	Art and Design	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spanish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drama	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Textiles art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Geography	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Food and Nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/>
History	<input type="checkbox"/>	Health and Fitness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Creative I-Media	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer Science	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religious Studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Business	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 3	Reserves
Please choose two reserves from section 2 in order of preference.	
Reserve No 1	Health and Fitness
Reserve No 2	Music

Signature		Date
Parent	Mrs Parent	15-03-2023
Student	Sarah Student	15-03-2023





ENGLISH LANGUAGE GCSE

WHAT WILL YOU BE LEARNING?

At GCSE, English splits into two qualifications - English Literature and English Language. English Language is the study of how writers use language in specific contexts and for specific reasons. It is said that the pen is mightier than the sword and this is completely true! You will also prepare a short presentation on the topic of your choice which will assess your spoken language skills.

WHO WOULD ENJOY IT?

English Language is extremely engaging for those who are interested in how language works and how it can be used to have a particular effect on people. Have you ever persuaded someone to do something for you? Have you ever tried to get out of a tricky situation? Chances are that you used particular language devices in order to do so.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Have a look at the exam board specification for this subject by following the below link: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700>

ASSESSMENT



Paper 1 - Fiction and Imaginative Writing - 1 hour 45 minutes; 50% of the qualification

Paper 2 - Non-Fiction and Transactional Writing - 1 hour 45 minutes; 50% of the qualification

Spoken Language
Endorsement (Does not contribute to overall grade)



WHERE CAN IT TAKE YOU?

English Language will be extremely helpful in complementing your studies in GCSE English Literature. Both are extremely popular choices at A Level and can lead to further study at university in either English Literature, Linguistics or Foreign Languages. A variety of careers are available that use English Language, including those in advertising and marketing, due to the power language can have when persuading others. Other popular careers using this subject are teaching English as a foreign language, magazine editor, journalist, publisher, and writer.

STUDENT QUOTES

"English has really helped me to understand how to be more imaginative and creative with my writing, which has helped me in lots of different subjects"

"Studying how writers use language in different ways has helped me think about how I use language in daily life when talking to others"

Skills Wheel

INTERESTED IN THIS?
HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT

HISTORY
LANGUAGES
OR
PERFORMING ARTS

CORE SUBJECTS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE GCSE

language

English

reasons, context, short, writer, assess, also, variety, qualifications, power, extreme, two, topic, study, presentation, specific, true, spoken, achieved, written, competence, literacy, spoken, variety, choice, power, extreme, two, topic, study, presentation, specific, true