



BEECHEN CLIFF

GCSE Curriculum Options

to start in September 2024

Choices Explained

9th January 2024



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Headteacher

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Deputy Headteacher
(Curriculum & Assessment)

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Assistant Headteacher
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Careers Lead



The aims this evening

- To outline the various pathways and options available to your son
- To outline the process including how to submit your choices
- To answer any questions you may have



The Aim of the Options Process

- To enable all pupils to study at broad and ambitious curriculum at KS4
- To provide a curriculum which meets pupils' needs and interests
- To ensure each pupil's curriculum effectively prepares them for the next stage in their education.



The Core Curriculum

Everybody studies:

- English Language GCSE
- English Literature GCSE
- Combined Science (2 GCSEs) or Separate Sciences (3 GCSEs)
- Maths GCSE
- PE and Games
- Tutorial and PSHE Programme



Option Choices

In addition pupils choose four other subjects to study in Year 10 and 11



Curriculum Pathways

To help pupils make choices that best suit them, we have two “pathways” which they can follow.

A third option is to attend a different school - which a very small minority of pupils choose to do each year.



Standard Options Pathway

For most pupils the following choices are available:

- Choose either History or Geography
- Choose a Modern Foreign Language
(French, German, Spanish or Italian)
- Choose two other subjects (a second humanities subject and/or language may be chosen)



Bespoke Options

For pupils who would benefit from a slightly less constrained range of options, any four subjects can be chosen, but no requirement to study a Language.

This could also include additional Literacy and Numeracy.

Mrs Blair or Mr Seal will contact you if this is offered.



Standard Options

What are the choices?

| | | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| Language Option | One of the following is chosen: | |
| Humanities Option | One of the following is chosen: | |
| Options | Two of the following are chosen: | |

- French
- German
- Spanish
- Italian

- History
- Geography

- Art GCSE
- Business Studies Level 1/2
- Computer Science GCSE
- Interactive Media Level 1/2 (Not to be taken with Computer Science)
- D&T: Hospitality and Catering Level 1/2
- D&T: Design & Technology GCSE
- Music GCSE
- Music Technology Level 2 (not to be taken with Music GCSE)
- Photography GCSE
- Physical Education GCSE
- Religion, Philosophy and Ethics GCSE
- Second Language GCSE (from the above)
- Second Humanities GCSE (from the above)



Bespoke Options

What are the choices?

Four of the following are chosen:

- Art GCSE
- Business Studies Level 1/2
- Computer Science GCSE
- D&T: Hospitality and Catering L1/2
- D&T: Design & Technology GCSE
- French GCSE
- Geography GCSE
- German GCSE
- History GCSE
- Interactive Media Level 1/2 (Not to be taken with Computer Science)
- Italian
- Music GCSE
- Music Technology Level 2 (not to be taken with Music GCSE)
- Photography GCSE
- Physical Education GCSE
- Religion, Philosophy and Ethics GCSE
- Spanish GCSE



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Options Booklet Online

<https://www.beechencliff.org.uk/parents/gcse-option-choices/>

Includes information on all the courses offered, the pathway and decision making timeline.



Timeline for making decisions

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Options assembly and taster sessions | 30th November 2023 |
| Parents' Information Meeting | Tuesday 9th January 2024 |
| Subject Information videos online | Wednesday 17th January 2024 |
| Selected pupils 1:1 with Mrs Pascoe | W/C Monday 15th January 2024 |
| Year 9 Parents' Evening | Wednesday 24th January 2024 |
| Senior staff meet pupils to discuss | Friday 26th January & Friday 2nd February 2024 |
| Deadline via the school website | Monday 5th February 2024 |



Advice for making decisions

Advice for pupils...

- Think for yourself – not what friends are doing
- Focus on the subject rather than personalities
- Think long term – find out what you need to achieve your goals beyond Beechen Cliff: 6th Form, College, University, work etc.
- Ask questions about the subjects
- Discuss your option choices with teachers and parents – listen to their advice



Completing the Options Form

- Complete online on the school website

www.beechencliff.org.uk

> Curriculum & Assessment > GCSE Options Form

- Select 4 options **in order of preference**
- **And** give two reserve options (in order of preference)
- **Also** give a preference for Science.

Deadline: Monday 5th February



Completing the Options Form

GCSE Options Form

Step 1 of 2

50%

 For information about how we will use your personal details please see our [Privacy Notice](#).

Pupil Name *

Tutor Group *

First Name

Surname

BY9a

Which set of options will you be following? *

Please Choose

Please Choose

Standard Options

Bespoke Options

I'm not sure, can you show me more information



Completing the Options Form

Which set of options will you be following? *

Standard Options



Languages Option Choice *

Please Choose



Humanities Option Choice *

Please Choose



First Preference Option Choice *

Please Choose



Second Preference Option Choice *

Please Choose



First Reserve Option Choice *

Please Choose



Second Reserve Option Choice *

Please Choose



Science Preference *

Please Choose





Completing the Options Form

Which set of options will you be following? *

Bespoke Options

First Preference Option Choice *

Please Choose

Second Preference Option Choice *

Please Choose

Third Preference Option Choice *

Please Choose

Fourth Preference Option Choice *

Please Choose

First Reserve Option Choice *

Please Choose

Second Reserve Option Choice *

Please Choose

Science Preference *

Please Choose



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Frequently Asked Questions



When will the choices be confirmed?

- Confirmation of allocation will be given in June
- Majority of students study their first choice subjects
- Where it is not possible to allocate all of a pupils' choices, we will take into account order of preference and allocate reserve choices if necessary.
- If combination of first choice subjects does not fit or a group is unviable due to lack of interest – a discussion with pupils will take place



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**Are pupils on different pathways
taught in different groups?**

No – all pupils are taught together



**My son really wants to study
a subject but only if he is
taught by Mr/Ms X**

This can't be guaranteed. It is better to
make choices based on the subject
rather than the teacher



Does any subject require equipment or a cost?

- For Photography GCSE a digital SLR camera is needed
- For Hospitality & Catering ingredients will need to be supplied by the pupil
- For Design & Technology some resources may need to be provided for the final project

Pupil Premium support available



Do I need to be good at a subject to take it for GCSE?

It is sensible to take subjects that you do well in but enjoyment of the subject is also important.

To ensure pupils have made appropriate decisions the choices will be shared with Heads of Subject and if there are concerns you will be contacted.



Options that can't go together

- Music GCSE **and** Music Technology L2

We also recommend that pupils don't do the following:

- Computer Science GCSE **and** Interactive Media L1/2
- Art GCSE **and** Photography GCSE.



Can a pupil change their mind on a subject later in the year?

Yes – but not all options will be available – some groups may be full or the combination of subjects may not work.

No changes after October.



What is the total number of GCSEs available?

Normally 9 – but up to 11 if Separate Sciences and/or an additional GCSE is taken



What about additional GCSEs?

Native Language GCSEs:

Recommended: Contact the Examinations Officer

Enrichment Options e.g. Further Maths GCSE

Top set Maths – contact Ms Hedger

Other possible qualifications

GCSE Statistics may be available for some students

We are also investigating a vocational sport qualification.



Will pupils be set in Year 10/11?

Setting occurs in Maths and Science in Year 10/11 and to some extent in English.

All option subjects are taught in mixed ability groupings.



Can my son choose whether to study Separate Sciences or Combined Science for GCSE?

As part of the options process you can indicate a preference. However, the final decision will be at the discretion of the Science Faculty.



My son has been selected for the Standard Options Pathway...

...but he doesn't want to do a language or History/Geography?

Please contact Mr Seal to discuss.



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GCSE Option Choices

Any further questions/queries:

options24@beechencliff.org.uk

headteacher@beechencliff.org.uk

or please stay behind to discuss.