

Key Stage 4 Options Evening 2026

Ms Webb

Assistant Headteacher

Key points:

- GCSE scale of 9-1 (as opposed to A*-G) in all GCSE subjects taken in school.
- No more controlled assessment – although internal assessment (also known as **non-exam-assessment**) will still exist in a number of subjects – e.g. art, media, music
- Tiered exams – Maths, Science and MFL only

The Importance of GCSEs

Core Subjects

These are subjects which all students must study.

English Language, English Literature, Maths and Science (double award) at GCSE level.

Students also study **Personal Development, PE** and **Religious Studies**, although these don't lead to a qualification.

+ 4 options

The importance of our qualifications

Why...?

- Suitable for learners wishing to study A-Levels or equivalent qualifications at college or sixth-form, pursue vocational education or hoping to go to university in the future.
- A range qualifications will give you a greater variety of possible career pathways.
- Studying in a familiar environment, with strong teaching by our own staff who know you.
- Wide variety of qualifications to choose from.

Guiding your choices, and how to complete the online form

What information is available?



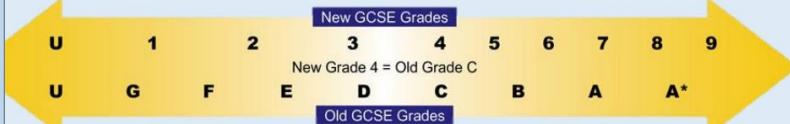
Inspire **Empower** **Achieve**

Year 9
Next Steps Evening
Thursday 29th January 2026
5:30pm-7:30pm
A link to complete online options choices will be sent out following Options Evening.


Taverham High School
An 11-18 Academy
Inspire | Empower | Achieve

The Government's reforms to GCSE, which are intended to drive up standards and bring England into line with other high performing countries (as measured by international tests such as PISA) represent a significant change to the way in which, and the level at which, you are assessed at the end of Year 11.

The chart below shows how the existing A*-G grades map across to the new 9-1 grading system. By replacing the current A* with Grades 8 and 9, the new system allows for greater differentiation between the highest grades:



The new courses are more challenging than ever, with all the exams set at the end of Year 11.

English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

Years 1 - 3 are the equivalent of GCSEs.

The Department for Education
The DfE

The remainder of this year

The Government's intention is that as many students as possible have the opportunity to study the suite of qualifications which lead to the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). This is a performance measure for schools which assures our learners receive a broad and balanced education and keeps young people's options open for further study and future careers. The EBacc consists of:

- English Language and Literature.
- Mathematics.
- Science.
- A Humanity (Geography or History).
- A Language (French, German, or Spanish).

A study by the UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects in the EBacc provides students with greater opportunities in further education and increases the likelihood that a pupil will stay on in full-time education. Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can help improve a young person's performance in English and Mathematics.

Raising the Participation Age (RPA):

The Government has increased the age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training. As a result, you will be required to continue in education or training until your 18th birthday.

RPA means that you will be required to choose one of the following options once you complete your time at Taverham High School Academy:

- Full-time education, such as a school, college, or home education.
- An apprenticeship.
- Part-time education or training if you are employed, self-employed or volunteering full-time (which is defined as 20 hours or more a week).

At Taverham High School Academy we have a thriving Sixth Form and wish you to view your studies at KS4 as part of the continuing journey with us from Year 7 all the way to Year 13 and beyond.

What information is available?

10. Please indicate whether you would like a meeting to discuss your options, and with whom. * (4)

- No meeting required.
- Meeting with Mrs Gray or a member of the SEN team (this option is for SEND students only).
- Meeting with Mrs Norris (this option is for students entitled to free school meals only).
- Meeting with Mrs Warwick (careers advisor).
- Meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.



11. Please add any other information that you wish to below. (4)

Enter your answer

What are the key points?

- Art
- Business
- Child Development
- Classical Civilisation
- Computer Science
- Construction Level 1
- Dance
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- Engineering
- Hospitality and Catering
- French
- Geography
- German
- History
- IT/Creative iMedia
- Mandarin
- Media Studies
- Music
- Philosophy, Religion and Ethics
- Physical Education
- Spanish

What are the key points?

Notes for selecting option choices:

- Students must choose **four** options.
- As part of the four options, students must choose a minimum of one from the following subjects: triple science, computer science, history, geography, French, Spanish, German, Mandarin.
- Students must not assume that choosing the same options as a friend will result in being placed in the same class. Several subjects have more than one group.
- All option subjects are taught to mixed ability groups, and we aspire for all students to aim for the highest grade possible. We will challenge and support all students to achieve, regardless of their target grade.
- Subjects such as engineering and computer science have a significant amount of mathematical content, and students must ensure they are confident in their ability to access the course material.
- In September students will have **fifteen school days** within which to change courses. After this point no further course changes will be permitted.
- The school reserves the right to alter the courses on offer subject to number of applications and staffing.
- When filling in the form, students will need to make **four** first choices, then **three** reserve choices.
- Reserve choices must be given in order of preference, and students must ensure the conditions of the second bullet point will still be met.
- Option 'blocks' will be constructed after initial choices have been made, aiming to fulfil as many of the four first choices as possible.

What form do I need to submit?

Year 9 Options: 2026-2028 – Fill in form

- The link to the form is listed above.
- From tomorrow, this can be found on our website under curriculum/introduction/.
- The link will be emailed to all Year 9 students tomorrow.
- Not a 'first come, first served' process.

If you are unable to access technology to submit this form electronically, please either contact reception to pick up a paper copy, or contact Student Support where your form can be submitted for you.

What form do I need to submit?



Year 9 Options: 2026-2028

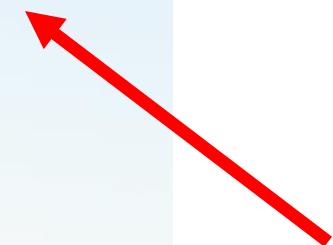
Please find below the Year 9 Options Form. This should be completed alongside reading the Options Booklet, which was emailed to you (and your parents/carers) and is also available on the school website.

My presentation, delivered at the Year 9 Options event on 29th January, will also be uploaded to the school website for any parents/carers who were unable to join us.

Please complete this form, by clicking on the relevant boxes, by 5pm on Friday 6th March.

Any late submissions will be considered after the allocation of subjects to those who submit their form on time.

- You are required to choose 1 subject from question 3.
- This will be your first choice Ebacc subject.
- You must then choose three more first choice options from questions 4, 5 and 6.
- Questions 7, 8, and 9, will be your 3 reserve options in order of preference.



Hi, Jessica. When you submit this form, the owner will see your name and email address.

* Required

1. Name (please make sure this is your full first and last name!) *

What form do I need to submit?

3. Please choose ONE from the following options: *

- Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
- Computer Science
- Geography
- History
- French
- Spanish
- German
- Mandarin
- I need to discuss this in a meeting with Mrs Dixon (SENCo)

What form do I need to submit?

4. Please choose your first preferred option: *

- Art
- Business Studies
- Child Development
- Classics
- Computer Science
- Construction (L1)
- Dance
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- Engineering
- Hospitality and Catering
- French
- Geography
- German
- History

What form do I need to submit?

7. Please choose your first RESERVE option (the subject you would like to study if your first choices are unavailable): * *

- Art
- Business Studies
- Child Development
- Classics
- Computer Science
- Construction (L1)
- Dance
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- Engineering
- Hospitality and Catering
- French
- Geography
- German

Important Points...

- English and Mathematics remain essential in terms of accessing further education, training and employment.
- Some post-16 or post-18 providers may only accept candidates with a '5' grade or better in a Modern Foreign Language.
- Most young people don't know exactly what they want as a career, and the majority will have several careers in their life. Breadth is key!
- The majority of people are most successful in subjects they enjoy.

Important Points...

- None of our courses in school have specific entry requirements – although when selecting subjects to study at KS4 you should consider whether anything will hinder your ability to achieve well.
- If it is a 'new' subject, try to find out what similarities it has with subjects you do already study to help you make your decision.
- Remember, these are your choices, for your future. It shouldn't matter what your friends, siblings or parents are doing or have done. Nor does it matter which teachers you like. Think only about your future!

“Why are students aiming for a grade 5 in English advised to take a language as one of their GCSE choices?”

Most students don't know what their future careers paths may be.

The combination of subjects this forces creates breadth and makes up the blend of subjects that are considered essential to many degrees and future employment opportunities.

Research shows that students with this combination have greater opportunities in further education and are more likely to stay on in full-time education. They also complement attainment in English and Maths.

“Why are students aiming for a grade 5 in English advised to take a language as one of their GCSE choices?”

However, unlike other schools, we don't believe there is value in forcing young people to take qualifications that they are unlikely to pass where they could gain passes in other qualifications – hence those with lower target grades have the opportunity to, but are not required to study a language.

“Does my child need to keep up their learning in subjects that they don’t intend to study at GCSE?”

It is a requirement for all students to take the subjects until the end of KS3.

Colleagues have planned lots of cross curricular links to make all learning valid.

Option choices are not guaranteed. Once blocking has been done, some combinations might not work.

FAQ...

“Can you clarify the advantages/disadvantages between taking separate sciences or combined please?”

Really dependent on level of interest, but will support post-16 routes.

“Do subjects such as A-level Psychology have specific GCSE requirements?”

Generally no for ‘new’ subjects. Most likely to ask for a grade 5 in English and maths.

Some subjects, such as Maths at A-level, have more specific entry requirements.

You can find out more from Mrs Robertson and the Sixth Form stall, and by asking at the option stalls in the Sports Hall.

“How can we find out about subjects that are new at GCSE e.g. Business (Enterprise and Marketing), Child Development, Media Studies etc.?”

Options booklet / This evening

FAQ...

“My child has SEND requirements, how will they be supported through the process?”

The SEN team are available this evening (in the atrium).
If requested, a member of the learning support team will be in touch to arrange a meeting.

“Can my child study any of the four languages offered?”

No. Only the one they've been studying at KS3.

The next steps...

To support the students with making their choices we will be providing the following:

Key Dates:

Thursday 29th January 2026: KS4 'Next Steps' Evening 5:30pm-7:30pm.

27th February 2026: 'Next Steps' interviews completed (on request).

6th March 2026: 'Next Steps' deadline – 5:00pm.

May 2026: 'Next Steps' outcomes confirmed to students and families.