

The Fernwood School

Year 9 Options

PATHWAY THREE



Dear pupils (and parents),

Choosing which subjects you are hoping to study for key stage 4 is perhaps the first really important decision you will have to make in your life. Hopefully this is an exciting moment for you as you start to make steps which will shape your future career, and begin to transition into being a young adult.

Choosing subjects opens doors to careers, so you will be needing to look beyond the next two years of your Fernwood journey, and start to consider what you might wish to do in both the next step and beyond. Over the coming weeks you will be supported through these choices by assemblies, your subject teachers, and also your tutors. There will also be information to listen to, read and digest. Most importantly, you need to choose subjects that you both enjoy studying and can also be successful in.

Firstly, you will need to know which optional subjects you can choose to study and which subjects are compulsory (core curriculum).

Core Curriculum:

There are some subjects which, because of their importance for life and the world of work, are considered to be essential for all students. So next year there will be some parts of your timetable where you will have no choice. But luckily, these are all exciting subjects which you would want to continue with anyway! Core Curriculum Subjects include:

- English (Language and Literature),
- Combined science,
- Mathematics,
- Religious education,
- Physical education
- Personal development (includes careers advice, information, and guidance, plus preparation for post 16 applications and work experience)

Foundation Learning:

On top of the core curriculum, we also want to ensure that you leave Fernwood with a broad suite of qualifications which show your skills and talents. To achieve this, we will be providing you with a further 5 smaller qualifications.

- The King's Trust Award (this was previously called the Prince's Trust)
- Level 1 ICT (Computing Skills)
- Level 1 Food & Cookery
- Level 1 Construction (Practical Skills)
- Level 1 Land Based Studies (Animal Science)

Optional Curriculum:

The remainder of your timetable will then be made up of your 'option choice'.

Technical Awards

Most courses at Fernwood lead to a GCSE (General Certificate of Education) qualification, but not all. Because GCSEs are highly academic in nature some students prefer, or are more suited to vocational qualifications. The Government call these **Technical Awards**.

Technical Awards are broad, high-quality qualifications that equip students with applied knowledge and associated practical skills. They focus on the applied study of an industry sector or occupational area, or the acquisition of practical and technical skills. Technical Awards fulfil entry requirements for both academic and vocational study post-16, alongside GCSEs.

Option for 2025

Once you have considered the decision to be made, and discussed your choices with your parents, it will be time to select the course you wish to study.

You will be asked to nominate **one subject**, and then **a reserve choice**.

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|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Advised Option | GCSE Art | These subjects are ones we would <u>recommend you choosing</u> , as they are high quality qualifications, that we believe you can be successful in. |
| | Tech Award: Creative iMedia* | |
| | Tech Award: Engineering* | |
| | Tech Award: Health & Social Care* | |
| | Tech Award: Information Technology* | |
| Other Available Option | <i>GCSE French</i> | It is also possible to choose from one of these subjects, but only through discussion and agreement with your subject teacher. These subjects are not recommended. |
| | <i>GCSE German</i> | |
| | <i>GCSE Geography</i> | |
| | <i>GCSE History</i> | |
| | <i>GCSE Business Studies</i> | |
| | <i>GCSE Music</i> | |
| | <i>GCSE PE</i> | |

Asterisk* = Technical Award



Options Website

<https://www.fernwood.school/parents/options>

All the information on what each course will entail is now available via our website (QR code link) for you to look through. There are videos from most subjects, along with written information that I encourage you to read thoroughly. Some children are quite surprised during year 10 as to what studying a specific subject actually entails, in comparison to what they imagined it would involve.

Final decisions – how to tell us your choices

In a few weeks' time, your key worker will meet you, and together you will decide which subject to choose.

Over Subscription and Under Subscription

We will do our best to make sure that you can study all the subjects that you want to study. However, we must let you know that on occasions situations may arise which mean that we are not always able to offer you your first choices; such as not enough people choosing a particular subject for it to run, all the places are taken in a subject or certain subject combinations may be impossible to timetable. The vast majority of pupils get their choices every year, and we will do our utmost to facilitate this.

Careers Advice

As part of their entitlement to careers education and guidance, Year 9 students receive a planned programme of lessons to give them help and information so that they make good career choices. This support is offered through PD lessons and is supplemented wherever possible by professionals.

Options Evening (for parents & pupils) – **Tuesday 4th February 2025,**

The event will be an in-person, evening event, which will include:

- A presentation from Ms Steans – SENCO
- An opportunity to visit subject areas, and speak to staff (and KS4 pupils) about the various courses on offer.
- 6pm to 7:15pm



FINAL OPTIONS DEADLINE:

Friday 28th February 2025

Enjoy the process, and remember, whatever you choose, make sure you enjoy it! If you enjoy something, you are far, far more likely to be brilliant at it!

Kind regards,

Mr D Jones
Assistant Head Teacher
Quality of Education