

S. King
Vice Principal
February 2024

Year 9 choices- a guide for parents and students



Year 9 choices

There are three routes in our guided choices programme:

- A) The triple science Ebacc route – students who show excellent progress and attitudes in science and MFL are offered this pathway. These students are selected by the relevant department(s) based on the latest progress data. **This route is invitation only.**
- B) The Ebacc route – students who show excellent progress and attitudes in the full suite of Ebacc subjects are offered this route. These students are selected by the relevant department(s) based on the latest progress data. **This route is invitation only.**
- C) The main route – this is for most of the students in the year group. Students choose from a range of qualifications

Year 9 options

- The compulsory or 'core' curriculum
- All students in the country must study the following subjects:
- Maths
- English Literature and Language
- Science (2 x GCSE, Triple pathway 3 x GCSE)
- PE (you must do PE, but you do not have to sit a qualification if you don't want to)
- CORE (including all mandatory PSHE and RSE)



Year 9 options



- The English Baccalaureate (Ebacc)
- We want all students to have a broad and balanced curriculum. Therefore, students must take an 'Ebacc' subject.
- This is chosen from:
 - Geography
 - History
 - French
 - Computer Science (your teacher must recommend you for this course)

Year 9 options

- The Full English Baccalaureate (Ebacc)
- In addition to the core curriculum offered at OSWB a student is considered to be a **FULL** Ebacc student if they take:
 - A modern foreign language **and**
 - A humanity (History or Geography)

This suite of subjects is highly prized by top universities and competitive apprenticeships so we will be recommending that suitable students study the full suite described above.



Year 9 options



- Your child will receive an options form tailored to their individual needs and prior attainment. A 'how to' guide for filling these forms in can be found on this area of the site. Please check the route to identify the right guide.
- As an academy, we are always striving to improve our offer so we will be making some curriculum changes for next year so that we increase the number of options available. This will result in more free choice for all our students.

Free choices

- Do not choose a subject you have already chosen for your Ebacc choice (e.g., French)

Some subjects cannot be taken together (as they are too similar)

- You can choose Art **or** Textiles (**not both**)
- Health and Social Care **or** Childcare (**not both**)
- ICT **or** Computer science (**not both**)
- You can only choose **one** PE option from GCSE PE, Btec sport and Btec Dance
- However, students **CAN** take both engineering qualifications if they wish.

2024 options and parents evening

- Parents evening is on Thursday February 29th from 3-45pm – 6-45pm
- You will have the chance to talk to your child's subject teachers before your child chooses their options.
- I will be available all evening if you have any specific questions about the options process. You may also give in completed options forms to me on the night.

FAQ's

- Why are there different routes and how are pupils chosen?

Some of the courses and routes we offer are suitable only for those students who have shown outstanding academic achievement throughout their time with us. We do not want to place pupils onto a suite of qualifications that they might struggle with. This is why we select certain students for certain routes.

FAQ's

- Is the main route worse for my child?

No! They can access all the courses at our sixth form or at external providers if they follow the main route. This route offers a blend of academic and vocational courses that lead to a wide range of options after year 11.

FAQ's

- What if my child wants to do full Ebacc but is not chosen for the pathway?

They still can! The main route for our pupils allows them to do this if they wish.

FAQ's

- How do we know if my child is suited to a particular subject?

Information about all our courses can be found on this area of our website. You will also have the chance to speak directly to your child's teachers at our parents evening. This will give you all the information you need to help your child make an informed choice.

FAQ's

- Which subjects does my child need for certain career choices or further study?

This information can be found on our website in the subject areas. However, Year 9 pupils should not worry too much. At this stage in their education, good grades in a range of subjects will allow them onto any course they might wish to study. Similarly, most universities and employers are looking for a range of good grades across all their subjects.

FAQ's

- Why must my child choose a reserve choice?

Once we get all the choices in, we block the subjects so that we can timetable them. Well over 98% of all students' year-on-year get their first choices. However, in rare cases we have clashes and so reserve choices are then used.

FAQ's

- What if my child changes their mind about their options?

If a pupil changes their mind about their choices whilst still in Year 9, they can come to talk to Mr. King about moving options. However, options will be blocked by then so some subjects may be full. It is therefore important to make the right choices first time.

Once they have started their courses in Year 10, we will offer a short window of **three weeks** to swap if there are any major issues. However, options may be full and once the grace period is over, **no options may be changed.**

FAQ's

- Who will be teaching my child?

The timetable for next year is not written yet! Therefore, choose subjects because you like them, not because of who might be teaching you (or whether or not your friend has picked the same subjects!)

FAQ's

- My older child did not get as many choices. Why is this?

We are making some changes to the curriculum to offer more choice next year. This is dependent on staffing and rooms and was not possible last year.

We also strive as an academy to improve every year.

Any questions?

- Please email me at sking@oswba.co.uk if you have any further questions.