

21 January, 2026

# Choosing your GCSE Options





# Questions to generate discussions

**What do you enjoy studying?**

**What subjects are you good at?**

**What advice have your teachers given?**

**Do you know what job or career you want to do?**

Finally, this last question I am going to ask is important.

They have, for the first time, choice.

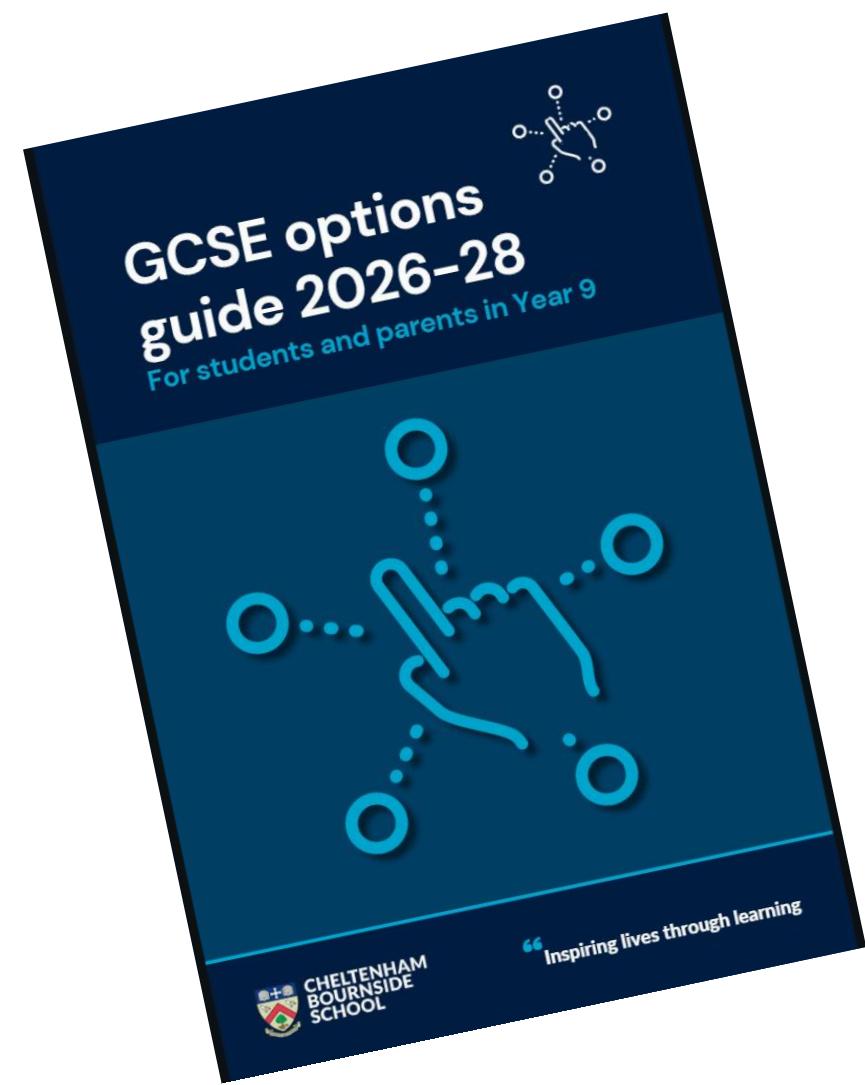
What they choose now can influence their future pathway

**How does their choice affect their future?**



# Choice is important

- Some subjects are pre-requisites for certain careers
- Some subjects can only be taken through to A Level if you have studied the subject at GCSE e.g. Languages
- Some universities, apprenticeship providers and employers want specific subjects for degree or other courses/training placements and so making the right choice now is so important
- Universities highly value the **English Baccalaureate** as a measure of academic potential and success
  - **EBacc** = English, Maths, Science, a Language and a Humanity subject (History or Geography)



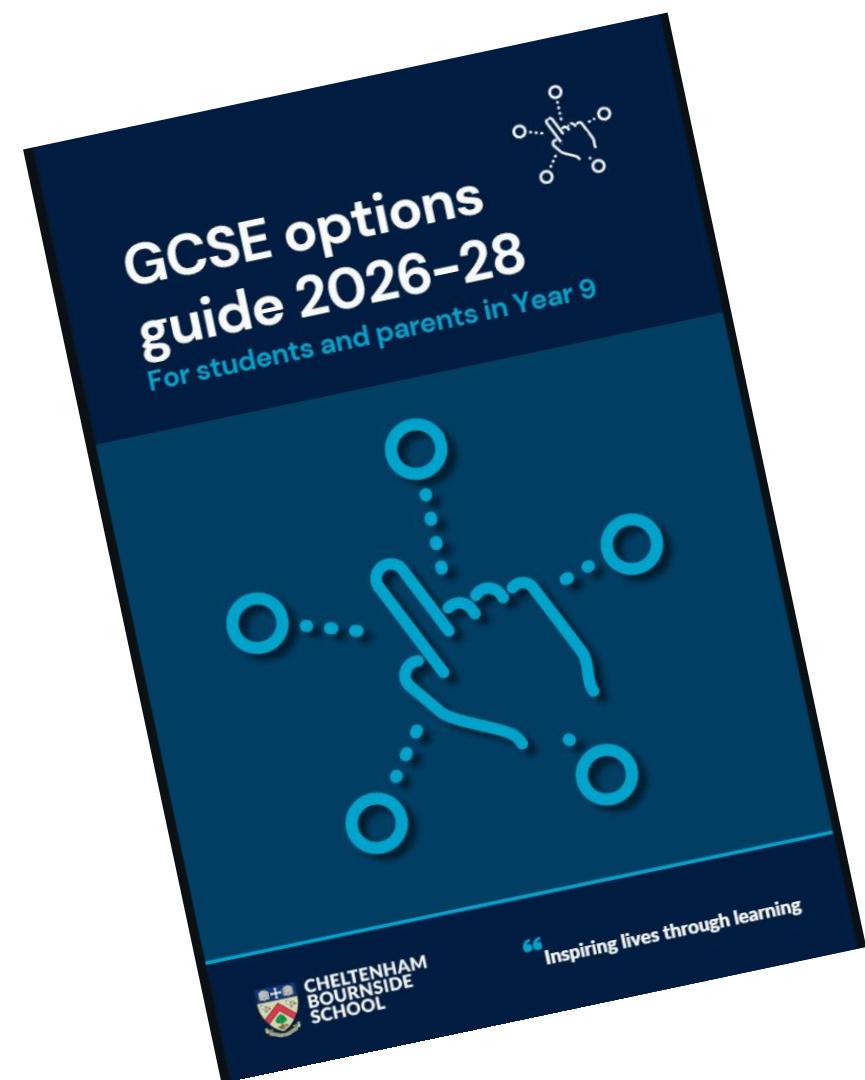
# Online guide booklet



## Parents tab on the website

Contains

- Key dates
- Option process
- Option Blocks
- Subject information
- Course requirements
- How they are assessed



# Subjects



## Compulsory

Information on the **core subjects** that all students study



## Optional

Information on each of our 31 GCSE/Level 2 courses that you can choose from

You must choose **4** optional subjects



**CHELTENHAM  
BOURNSIDE  
SCHOOL**



**Inspiring lives through learning**

# The Core Subjects

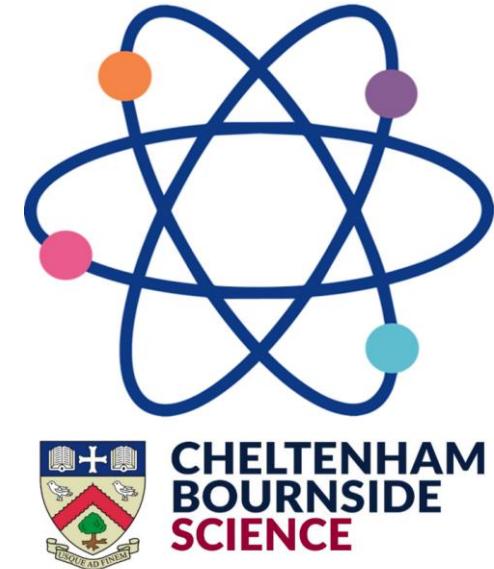
The Core (30 hours per cycle):

- **English Language and Literature GCSEs** (9 hours)
- **Maths GCSE** (8 hours)
- **Science GCSEs** (2/3 GCSEs) (9 or 14 hours)
- **Sport and Games** (not examined) (2 hours)
- **Education for Life and Religion & Worldviews**  
(not examined) (2 hours)
- Either 5 or 6 GCSEs will be achieved



# Which route through Science?

**GCSE Combined Science** – this is the route that most students will follow, where they will gain 2 GCSE grades/qualifications i.e. a Double Science qualification.



**GCSE Separate Sciences** – you will study three separate sciences leading to GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Separate grades will be achieved for each science. To do this you must chose **Triple Science** as one of your compulsory option choices.

**Both routes are suitable preparation for any A Level Science course(s).**

# Optional Subjects

4 additional subjects from the choice of 31 subjects.

At least **one of the four** must be either:

- History
- Geography
- Triple Science
- Computer Science
- A Modern Foreign Language

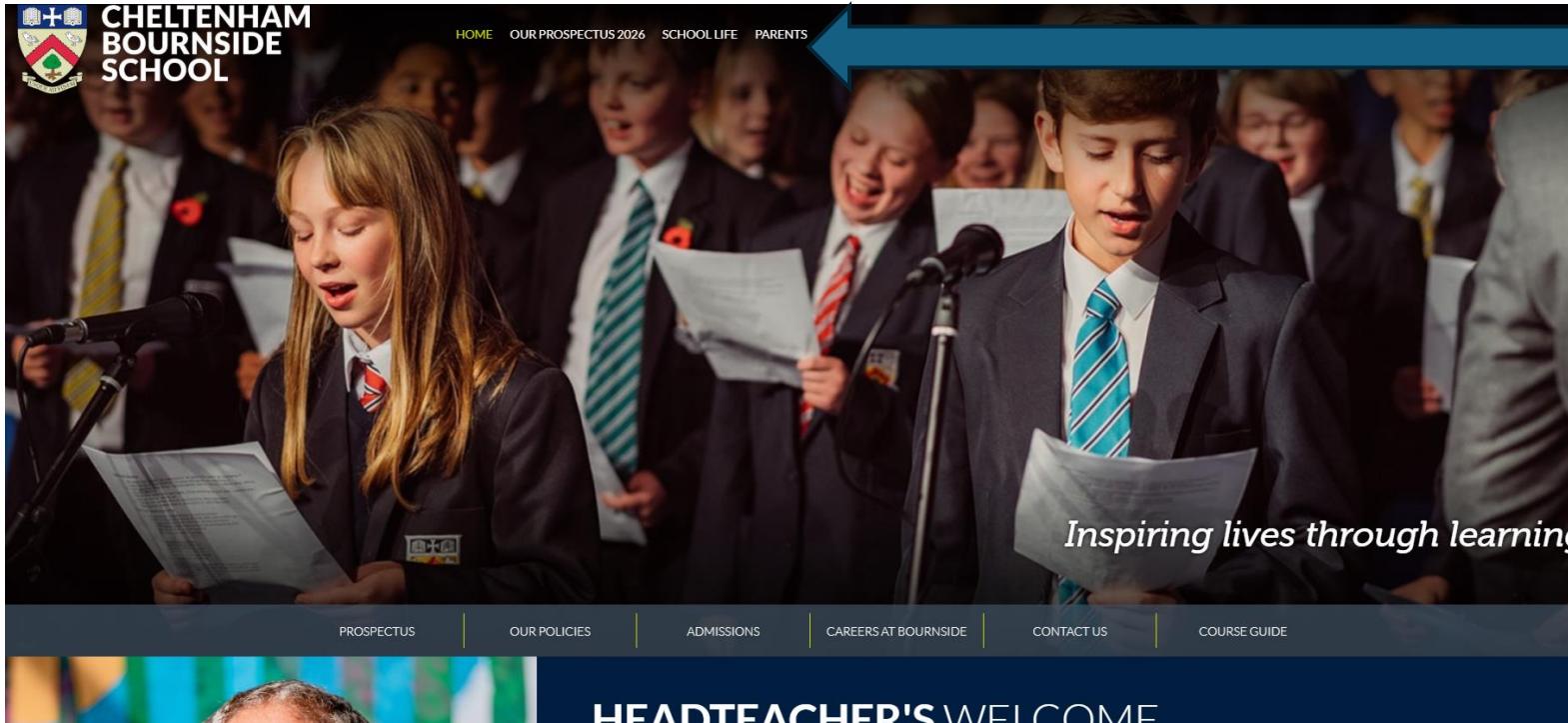
Compulsory subjects are highlighted in gold. You only need to pick one and this can be from any block. You can pick more than one compulsory subject.



# Option Blocks

Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D
Choose one subject in this block:  Art Photography Business Studies <b>Computer Science</b> Creative iMedia Dance Fine Art Foundation Learning Food Prep <b>French</b> Sport BTEC <b>Geography</b> <b>History</b> Health & Social Care Product Design <b>Triple Science</b>	Choose one subject in this block:  Art 3D Business Studies Business Vocational Drama Economics Food Prep Sport BTEC <b>Geography</b> <b>History</b> Mandarin Physical Education Product Design Religious Studies Sociology <b>Spanish</b>	Choose one subject in this block:  Business Studies Business Vocational Creative iMedia Food Prep Fine Art <b>Geography</b> <b>German</b> <b>History</b> Health & Social Care Music Religious Studies Sociology <b>Triple Science</b>	Choose one subject in this block:  Art Photography Business Studies <b>Computer Science</b> Drama Fine Art Film Studies Sport BTEC <b>Geography</b> <b>History</b> Product Design Psychology Religious Studies <b>Spanish</b> Textiles

# Website - options



Choose Parents > Options

# How to choose? Take your time

Please then look at each section in the booklet:

- 1. Compulsory subjects** – information on the core that all students study
- 2. Optional subjects** – information on each of our 31GCSE/Level 2 courses that you can choose from

Careers information and help/guidance is found on the School Life page of our website – Careers & Work-related learning section

**Options Form** – this will not be live until February 6

# Guidance on how to choose?

Encouraging son/ daughter to:

- Look at the Options site and make a short list of options that they want to consider
- Look at the Careers information and Unifrog and consider which options they need to consider
- Engage with E4L lessons which will focus on options and careers all term
- Seek advice from their teachers, school staff etc.
- Read our Sixth Form prospectus – this will go live later this month with an introduction from Mr Warren, our Head of Sixth Form.

Attend the Sixth Form open evening, **Thursday 22nd January 5:30pm – 8:00pm** with your son/ daughter

Attend the Year 9 PTC in early February with your son/ daughter

Always look back to their choices and consider this question:

**Are they sensible choices given their current career thoughts/pathways sought?**

If these are not clear to you yet, keep options broad to keep their options open....

**Deadline for choices – Monday 23rd February, 9am**

## What is “Foundation Learning”?

This is a package of support for those students who we identify will:

- Find the full range of GCSEs quite demanding
- Need additional support with literacy and numeracy
- Need additional support accessing Post-16 options
- Benefit from focusing on a skills approach to support future progression

This is a very bespoke offer

Mrs Lees and Mr Mudge will identify and talk to those students who they believe this course might be suitable for and will be in contact with them.

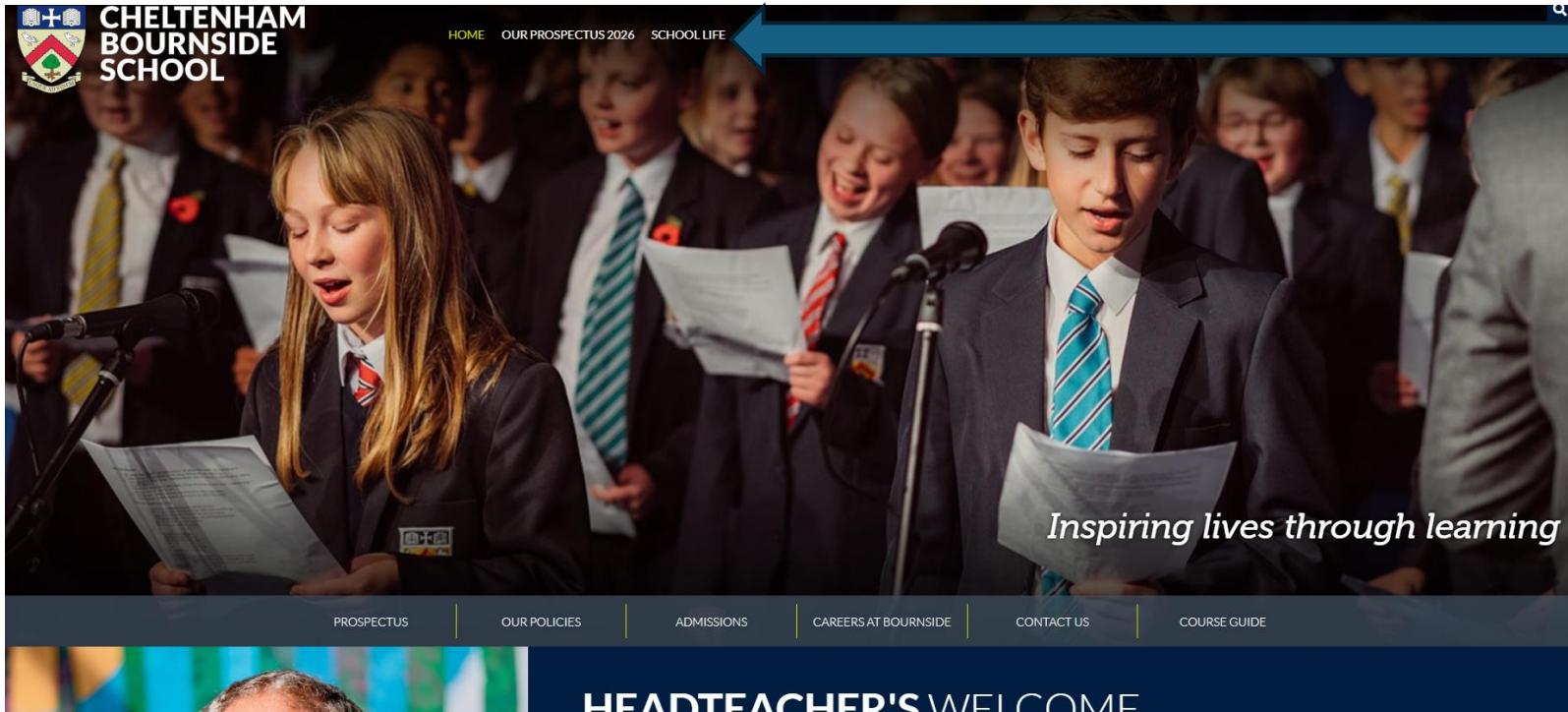
## What is a “Pathway”?

It might be that you put a package of options together that might lead to a certain career

- 1. Art and Design Pathway** – Fine Art, Media Studies and Creative iMedia
- 2. Humanities Pathway** – Geography, History and Religious Studies
- 3. Technology Pathway** – Computing, Product Design and Creative iMedia
- 4. Healthcare Pathway** – Health & Social Care and Sociology
- 5. Languages Pathway** – at least two Language options

Universities prize the **English Baccalaureate** – to get this you would need to study History or Geography and a Modern Foreign Language, alongside English, Maths and Science. When these subjects are added to the Core, this gives you a broad, academic set of options that top universities are often looking for when looking at applications.

# Website – Careers support and guidance



Choose **school life**  
> Careers and work –  
related learning

# Website – Careers support and guidance

## CAREERS & WORK-RELATED LEARNING



### How do we support our students?

At Bournside we are proud of our Careers offer. We have a well-resourced Careers Hub which provides students with information and access to a fully trained careers advisor and support staff, who are happy to support and talk with students, parents and staff. One-to-one and group work activities take place throughout the year for year 10 - 13 students.

- **Ginny Martin, Careers Leader**, brings a wealth of careers-related experience to the main school and our Sixth Form to support you with making informed choices about your future.
- **Rebecca Mar-Garrison, Careers Administrator**, offers support to the careers function and is the first point of call for student and employer queries.
- To contact the **Careers Team** please email [careers@bournside.com](mailto:careers@bournside.com) or call 01242 235555

- E4L lesson will focus on options and careers guidance
- All lessons supported by Mrs Lees and a member of the Careers team
- Introduction to Unifrog

**unifrog**



**'School life' tab on the website**



# Additional language qualification

- If you fluently speak and read another language as your home language, there may be an opportunity for you to sit a GCSE in that language in Year 10.
- Please speak with Mrs Haines or Mrs Lees to find out more details.



## Where next for POST 16?

Applications made in year 11

Sixth Form?  
College?  
Apprenticeship?



SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING  
JANUARY 22nd 5:30pm – 8:00pm



Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January - Pathways into **Law**

Friday 16th January - Elevate her - encouraging women into **aviation**

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January - Opportunities in the **NHS**

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January - Engineering a Career in **Defence**

Friday 30th January - the Truth behind **data and AI**

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> Feb - Careers in **Archaeology** and Heritage

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> Feb - **Accountancy** Apprenticeships

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March - University of Gloucestershire Y10 and Y12 residential

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March - Body Art ... running a successful **business**

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March - **Marketing** and career decisions

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March - Starting a Career in **Graphics**

Monday 5th January

Options Assembly (all of Year 9) and options advice during EFL lessons

Wednesday  
7th January

Options Information Evening (open to parents/carers/students). Please choose to attend one of two available sessions (5.15 - 6.00pm OR 6.30pm - 7.15pm).

Thursday 22nd January

Sixth form opening evening 5:30pm

Friday 30th January

Year 9 Report 2 published

Tuesday 3rd February

Year 9 PTC - focusing on Options decisions

Friday 6th February

Options form live (open for two weeks)

Monday 23rd February

Options Form submission deadline (8.00am)

w/c 16th June

Confirmation of Options Choices (via email)

# KEY DATES





## Chance to shape the adult they will become

- What clubs, activities and opportunities are they currently engaging with?
- If not, they need to start now
  - DofE, Clubs in/ out of school, volunteering
- Their engagement, approach and attitude to learning over the next two years will build the foundation for their future
- Maths and English - cornerstone qualifications
- Attendance at school is key

# Who can I speak to?

Mrs Lees – **Assistant Head** and in all Education 4 Life lessons

Mrs Martin - **Careers Leader**, brings a wealth of careers-related experience to the main school and our Sixth Form to support you with making informed choices about your future.

Mrs Mar-Gerrison, **Careers Administrator**, offers support to the careers function and is the first point of call for student and employer queries.

To contact the **Careers Team**, email [careers@bournside.com](mailto:careers@bournside.com)

Mrs Littlewood – **Deputy Head of Sixth Form (Academic)**

Miss Brown – **Assistant Head of Sixth Form (Academic)**

Talk to your teachers, your tutor, your parents



“Inspiring lives  
through learning