



Year 8 Options 2021-22

Mr D Mead (Deputy Headteacher)

April 20th 2021



KS4 model – Years 9, 10, 11

Extra 'Life' Qualification, studied in Year 9, alongside option subjects and core provision (3 GCSE Equivalents)

- Financial Capability and Careers Development (1)
- Equality and Diversity (2)

Core Subjects (6 GCSEs)

- English Language and English Literature (2)
- Maths and Numeracy (2)
- Science Double Award (2)

Welsh Baccalaureate (1 GCSE)

- Skills Challenge Certificate (1)

Other Compulsory Elements (1 GCSE)

- Full Course Welsh GCSE (1)
- Compulsory Religious Studies
- Compulsory PE
- PSE (delivered in sessions with form tutors and in PSE days)

3 Option Choices (3 GCSEs or Vocational Equivalents)

- Option A (1)
- Option B (1)
- Option C (1)

TOTAL GCSEs (or equivalents) = 14



MACS KS4 model – introduced in 2020

- Pupils select their KS4 option subjects in Year 8, rather than Year 9.
- Pupils will choose **three** option subjects.
- Pupils will study these subjects for three years (Years 9, 10 and 11), alongside the core provision of English, Mathematics, Science, Welsh, Physical Education, Religious Studies, PSE and the Skills Challenge Certificate.
- The ‘extra’ year will free up time to study other useful life qualifications in year 9 e.g. ‘Financial Capability and Careers Development’, ‘Equality & Diversity’.



Why a three year KS4?

- A number of local schools had already made the transition to this model and feedback was very positive.
- Those schools that we consulted reported that pupils' progress, motivation and engagement had improved.
- More time to deliver the GCSE syllabus content and explore the subject more fully.
- More opportunities to meet the needs of all learners (e.g. MAT, ALN).
- More time to prepare pupils more thoroughly for external examinations and controlled assessments.



Why a three year KS4?

- GCSEs are now more content-driven, leaving insufficient time to get through course content.
- Less emphasis on controlled assessment/ coursework and a greater emphasis on terminal examinations which are, in many cases, worth a higher percentage of the final grade.
- In order to compete with pupils from other schools pupils need more time to complete their GCSEs in order to maximise their average points scores.



Why a three year KS4?

- Reduced pressure from exams as pupils are better prepared.
- Greater flexibility in the curriculum to enable:
 - Year group activities such as external speakers, workshops.
 - Delivery of additional qualifications to equip pupils with skills for life e.g. Financial Capability and Careers Development, Equality & Diversity.
- Reduces apathy and disengagement amongst Year 9 pupils due to earlier choice of option subjects. Pupils choose the subjects they enjoy most or are most interested in.
- More time to raise pupils' aspirations and to prepare them for the next step in their career e.g. 6th form, college, apprenticeship or employment.
- Pupils have missed a lot of face-to-face learning due to lockdown – this provides an opportunity to specialise in subjects where they will be awarded qualifications from now on.



Timeline

- **20th April 2021** - Year 8 Options Webinar. Options booklets and forms posted on school's website. On-line options forms made live.
- **20th April to 30th April 2021** – study options booklet and discuss options with parents/staff. Sam Richards (Careers Adviser) available to answer queries.
- **30th April 2020** – Deadline for completion of on-line options form.
- **After 30th 2021** – Option choices analysed and curriculum finalised. A further options trawl may be required at this stage.

