

# Idsall School



Part of **MARCHES ACADEMY TRUST**

## Welcome to Year 9 Options Presentation

Mrs Marston (Deputy Head)

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*E Glandibus Quercus* “Great oaks from little acorns grow”



# September 2025 – GCSE Option Blocks

A	B	C	D
Geography	Geography	Geography	Geography
History	History	History	History
	Separate Science	Computer Science	French
			Separate Science
Construction			
ICT (BTEC)		Music	Psychology
Drama	Business (GCSE)	Business (GCSE)	Business (GCSE)
Psychology	Health & Social (BTEC)	Photography	Sport (BTEC)
PE (GCSE)	Religious Studies	Product Design	PE (GCSE)
Health & Social (BTEC)	Food	Food	
Art			Art

You **MUST** choose one subject from each column (block) A, B, C and D

At least one of your four choices **MUST** be from the top, shaded section of any block.

**Construction** requires two blocks (A and B).

**Business Studies** and **PE & Sport** have two possible pathways, GCSE or BTEC/CNAT. Both routes in each subject lead to A level.

If you want to study Biology, Chemistry and Physics as 3 separate GCSEs you must take Separate Science.

## **NOTE:**

*We reserve the right to withdraw an option if insufficient students choose to study it.  
We reserve the right to reassign students to other Blocks or subject if the subject option is over-subscribed.*

## Key Dates and action

Wednesday 26th February (5pm) to Thursday 13th March (5pm)  
Options Selection (Online).

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Further support and guidance will be given to students over the next couple of weeks.

If you have any concerns or require some help, then please contact Mrs Marston – [michelle.marston@ids.mmat.co.uk](mailto:michelle.marston@ids.mmat.co.uk); or Mr Barbary – [gavin.barbary@ids.mmat.co.uk](mailto:gavin.barbary@ids.mmat.co.uk)

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Please only submit ONE response per student.

# Curriculum Intent

All students at  
Idsall are entitled  
to a curriculum  
that is:

- **Broad and Balanced**
- **Relevant**
- **Challenging**
- **Enjoyable**

# Subjects your child must take: **The Core**

English

Maths

Science

P.E

PSHCE

4 x option subjects	10 hours
Maths	4 hours
English Language and Literature	4.5 hours
Combined Science	4.5 hours
PSHCE	1 hour
P.E	1 hour

# “Blended choice”

We want students to be able to choose between a wide range of subjects on offer:

- Geography
- History
- Computer Science
- Separate Sciences
- French
- Art
- Business
- Food & Nutrition
- Health & Social Care (BTEC)
- ICT (BTEC)
- Music
- P.E
- Drama
- Product Design
- Photography
- Psychology
- Religious Studies (Philosophy & Ethics)
- Sport (BTEC)

# Option Form

**You MUST choose ONLY ONE subject from each block** - A, B, C and D. Construction takes up 2 of the 4 options you have.

**ONE (or more) of your four choices MUST be either: Geography, History, Separate Science, Computer Science or French.**

If you want to study Biology, Chemistry and Physics as 3 separate GCSEs you must take Separate Science.

3. Option Block A - choose ONLY ONE subject \*

- ☐ **Geography (see notes at top)**
- ☐ **History (see notes at top)**
- ☐ Construction\* (**takes up 2 options**)
- ☐ ICT (BTEC)
- ☐ Drama
- ☐ Psychology
- ☐ Physical Education
- ☐ Health & Social Care (BTEC)
- ☐ Art

# GCSE or BTEC/CNAT

## GCSE

- Linear exam at end of year 11
- Only able to resit English and Maths post 16)
- No coursework except in a few subjects (The Arts, Design Technology, Graphics, Food etc.)
- **Grading system 9-1**
- Grade 4 ('standard pass') and 5 ('strong pass') in English and Maths

## BTEC/Cambridge National

- Mix of coursework, internal assessment, exams
- High-quality, career-focused qualifications
- Grounded in the world of work.
- Courses retain some elements of controlled assessment, but *all* have an examination element too
- **Grading system – pass, merit, distinction**



# The Ebacc

## English Baccalaureate (Ebacc)


- It is a collection of subjects a student can study.  
Achieved when:
- Grade 5 (or above) in English, Maths, Two Sciences, a Language and either History or Geography

**‘The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a School performance measure, not a qualification. *It is not compulsory*’ DfE**

# Our view on the Ebacc

- We support the idea of a **broad and balanced curriculum** that has some flexibility to meet the needs and aspirations of all our students
- We want students to have choice
- Studying the EBacc subjects alongside one of the Arts and a Technology subject would provide breadth and balance

We ***will not*** insist on students doing the full suite of Ebacc subjects



## However.....

- Students should consider studying the Ebacc suite of subjects if they are thinking about **some** higher education courses in the future as they are seen by many as more 'academic'.
- They can study these subjects if they want to.

# Science

- We highly recommend that all students considering an A-level science should opt for separate sciences . This will give three separate GCSEs in Physics, Chemistry and Biology.
- Students could do an A-level science with a good grade (9-6) in Combined Science, but it does not give the same preparation/depth of study as the single science courses.

Students in groups 1 and 2 should strongly consider continuing with Separate Science at GCSE

# Languages

**We highly recommend that all students in top sets for languages should seriously consider continuing to study French at GCSE level.**

## ***WHY?***

A qualification in a different language shows employers that you have something special to offer and that you are an articulate and confident individual with excellent problem solving and critical thinking skills and someone who is sensitive to cultural difference.

***We live and work in a global marketplace with clients expecting that their partners will use their language to do business. To succeed in the 21st century business world requires companies to be mindful of opportunities all across the world and the need for speakers of other languages has never been more relevant.***

**Brian Stobie, International Durham**

- **Languages are optional** for the current Year 9 cohort

# Skills Centre courses

- 4hrs of lessons per week

*Take up TWO option blocks*

- Very practical in nature and often lead to students taking further courses when they get to 16

# DO:

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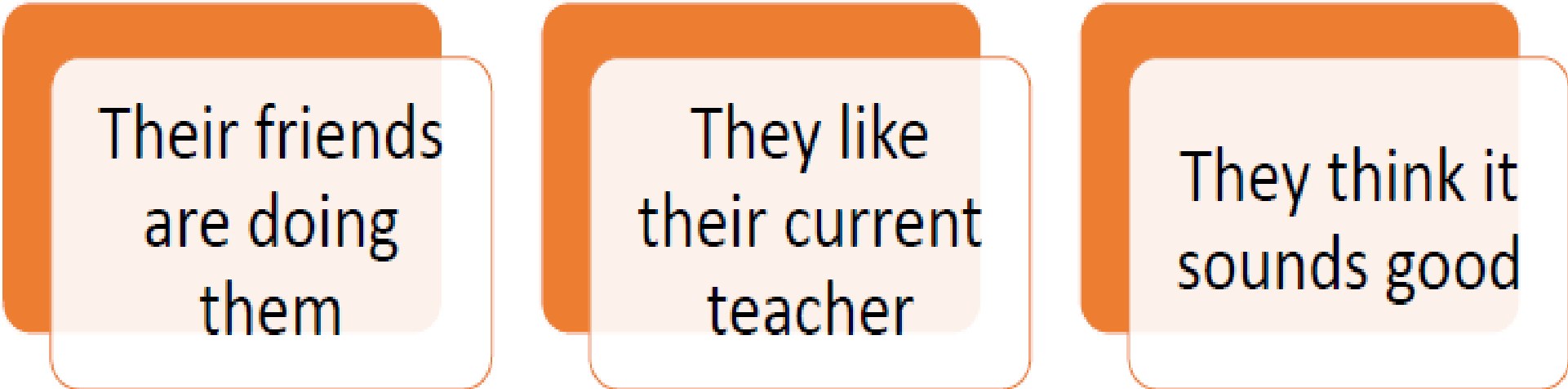
- *Take your time.* Making hurried choices could mean making the wrong choices.
- *Think about which subjects you are good at and look at your performance in these subjects up to now.*
- *Consider your behaviour and effort in the subject – has it been good? Have you worked to your best ability?*
- *Do you enjoy the subject? If you enjoy it, you are more likely to work hard and gain good grades*

Think ahead:

- Do you want to do A levels/Apprenticeship/L3 BTEC?
- Do you want to go to university?

Do you know what you want to do after year 11?????

# Students should not choose courses because:




Their friends  
are doing  
them

They like  
their current  
teacher

They think it  
sounds good





What if you don't know what you want to do in the future

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Many Year 9 students have no idea what career they might eventually go into, and if this is the case, it makes sense for your child to choose as broad a range of subjects as possible.

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A good rule of thumb to keep your future options open is to take at least one subject from each of the four entitlement areas, on top of the core subjects.

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Universities often prefer applicants who have a wide range of GCSEs in conventional subjects such as history, geography and the sciences, rather than more specialist subjects like media studies or psychology.

# What to do if you do know what you want to do in the future

If you do already have a career in mind or are leaning towards studying a certain subject at GCSE, encourage *look at the entry requirements for a university course or other training in that area.*

Taking specific subjects may put them at an advantage when they're applying for further education.

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