

Year 8 Mastery Pathways



Mr Collins – Assistant Principal – Curriculum, Timetabling & Operations

Tuesday 27th January 2026



Proud to Learn Respect Honesty Kindness

Year 8 Mastery Pathways



The Purpose of this Evening

To provide you with further information on how best to support your child in selecting subjects for Year 9.

To help you understand the process of sharing their preferred subjects with the school.



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Past, Present & Future

Previously	Tonight	Next Steps
Year 8 Parents' Consultation - Dec	Presentation on selecting subject	Discuss the information shared tonight and in the booklet with your child
Year 8 reports sent home	Opportunity to speak to Subject Leaders in the Quad	Speak to or email any teachers if you need more information
Mastery Pathway Booklet shared with students via Microsoft Teams	Go home and write down any questions you have	A form asking for subject choices will be emailed to students in the next 48 hours
Staff have been sharing subject specific information in lessons and assembly		Complete this form by: Monday 23rd February
Work completed in PSHE & drop-down days regarding careers (Unifrog)		
Year 8 team have placed students on appropriate pathways		

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Advice & Support

- **Speak to or email teachers if you have any questions**
- **Ms Sharma leads careers and works closely with our careers advisor – Ms Simpson**

[National Careers Service](#)

(Learn more about your skills and match to potential careers)



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GCSEs and BTECs

Both qualifications are recognised by the school, further education and employers.

GCSE – Are graded from 9 to 1 mainly derived from examinations at the end of the course.

BTEC – Are assessed differently to GCSEs and contain a higher proportion of coursework.

- A **pass** is equivalent to a **GCSE grade 4**
- A **merit** is equivalent to a **GCSE grade 5/6**
- A **distinction** is equivalent to a **GCSE grade 7**
- A **distinction*** is equivalent to a **GCSE grade 8/9**



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The ARA Approach

- No two students are the same, so we offer a range of flexible pathways
- We want students to have as much choice as possible so **no preconceived blocks!**
- We guide students down the correct route to maximise their potential and ensure a smooth transition to KS4 and then Post 16 (KS5)



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The 2 Pathways

Ruby Pathway

Pupils placed on the Ruby pathway follow a curriculum which includes a combination of courses that means they are following a **broad academic route** that provides a good grounding for the study of a wide range of subjects at university.

Emerald Pathway

The second pathway is designed to provide a more tailored route for pupils that may find nine academic subjects challenging. This route still provides sufficient depth and breadth to enable pupils to excel in school and achieve great results but also delivers **additional support in literacy, numeracy, life skills and employability.**

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The 2 Pathways

Number of lesson per week

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Ruby	Maths		English			Science			Humanity		MFL or Creative		Open Choice 1		Open Choice 2		PE		PSHE						
Emerald	Maths		English			Science			Humanity, MFL or Creative		Open Choice 1		Open Choice 2		Literacy, Numeracy & life skills		PE		PSHE						

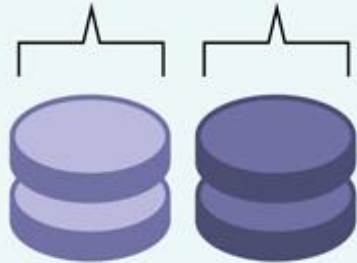
Year 8 Mastery Pathways



Progress 8

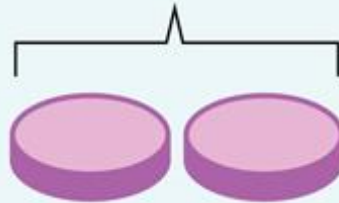
Progress 8 and Attainment 8 proposal

English Maths

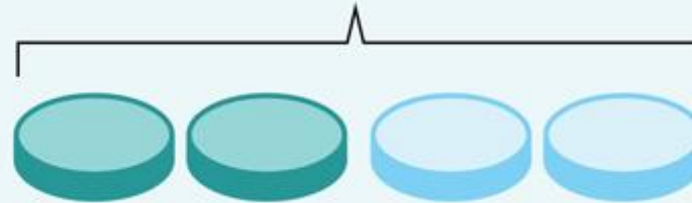


The English and Maths slots are double-weighted. In the English slot, a pupil must take both English Literature and English Language for the higher grade to be double-weighted. The lower grade can count in a breadth slot.

Science



Breadth



At least two breadth slots must include subjects from 2 of the following 3 categories:

- Humanities
- Creative subjects
- Languages

We're interested in the sector's views as to whether there should be a 4th science category which also includes computer science

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The offer:

The Common Core – All Students

English Language GCSE
English Literature GCSE
Mathematics GCSE
Double Science (equivalent to two GCSEs)
PE (non-examined)
PSHE (non-examined)

Open Choices – Non-Compulsory

Art & Design	History
Art Graphics	Music
Art Textiles	Photography
Business Studies	Product Design (DT)
Computer Science	Religious Studies
Drama	Spanish
French	Sports Science
Geography	Triple Science
Health & Social Care	Travel & Tourism

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Subject Choices

Humanities

- Geography
- History
- Religious Studies

Pick one **blue**

Creative Subjects

- Art & Design
- Art Graphics
- Art Textiles
- Drama
- Music
- Photography
- Product Design (DT)

Pick one **red**

Languages

- French
- Spanish

Open Choices

- Art & Design
- Art Graphics
- Art Textiles
- Business Studies
- Computer Science
- Drama
- French
- Geography
- Health & Social Care
- History
- Music
- Photography
- Product Design (DT)
- Religious Studies
- Spanish
- Sports Science
- Triple Science**
- Travel & Tourism

Pick two **green**

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Banned Combinations

- Students can study a maximum of **one** Art qualification, (Art & Design, Art Graphics, Art Textiles)
- Photography counts as a separate qualification and can be studied alongside Art
- Students can only study a language they have studied previously, (French or Spanish)



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Home Language – Y10/11

- There may also be a possibility of your child taking a GCSE in their **home language**, (e.g. Polish, Arabic, Chinese, Italian.....)
- To do this they need to be able to **speak, read and write** their home language at a high level
- This would involve no taught lessons in school, students would sit the exam papers only
- We would assess students in advance to make sure they are capable of achieving a high grade



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How to Pick Subjects

- Pick subjects you are **good** at
- Pick subjects you **enjoy**
- Do not pick subjects that relate to a future **aspiration**

- Do not pick a subject because your **friend** has
- Do not pick a subject because you like/dislike a **teacher**



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Does it matter what you study?

- **What grades do you need to study A-levels at ARA?**
- **5 good GCSE grades (9-5) including English & Maths**

- **What grades do you need to go to University?**
- **5 good GCSE grades (9-5) including English & Maths and three good A-level or BTEC L3 grades**

We recommend that candidates take those GCSE subjects that they enjoy the most and are confident in achieving good grades in.



Attendance



It's only a day? What difference does it make?

Attendance	Days Missed	Weeks Missed	Lessons Missed
95%	9.5 days	2 weeks	48 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	95 lessons
85%	28.5 days	6 weeks	143 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	190 lessons
75%	47.5 days	10 weeks	380 lessons
70%	57 days	11 weeks	285 lessons
65%	66.5 days	13 weeks	333 lessons

What can you do to help your child achieve their potential?

- Ensure that they are in school on time every day.
- Most of the time feeling a little under the weather doesn't mean they need a whole day off.
- Book appointments outside of school hours or during holidays.
- 13 weeks holiday a year – family holidays should be during this time not during school weeks.
- Ensure they are prepared with uniform and equipment every day. Support homework completion – minimising anxiety.
- Good sleep hygiene/routines – no mobile phones or computer games an hour before sleep.

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Attendance



It's only a day? What difference does it make?

GCSE Results 2024:

- 1. **96.6%** (9,9,9,9,8,8,8,8,6)
- 2. **98.4%**
- 3. **97.5%**
- 4. **99.6%**
- 5. **95.8%**

Average: **97.6%**
(In school 5 days a week)

- 174. **77.7%**
- 175. **80.4%**
- 176. **59.2%**
- 177. **73.9%**
- 178. **76.1%** (1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1)

Average: **73.5%**
(In school 3.5 days a week)

Generally, the higher the percentage of sessions missed across the key stage at KS4, the lower the level of attainment at GCSE

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Completing the Form

- This will be emailed to students within 48 hours
- **It must be completed by 23rd February 2026**
- **Work on the timetable will start the following day.**
The school will pick subjects for any student who has not returned the form



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Completing the Form

Name: Year8 Student1 Tutor group: Raja

Please select subjects to study in Y9:

Work your way carefully through the form below. You can only complete the form **once** so if you make a mistake you will need to see Mr Collins after the deadline has passed, (23rd February).

Speak to your teachers to decide what the best options are for you. You should pick subjects that you **enjoy** and you are **good** at.

You must:

- Select a humanity to study.
- Select a creative subject **or** language to study.
- Select two more subjects from the open list.

All students will be expected to study English, Mathematics, Science, Core PE and PSHE.

Common rules: Total Main choices 4 Total Reserves 2 • A subject can only be selected once as a main or reserve choice

• You may only select one of these subjects as a main choice: Art & Design, Art Graphics, Art Textiles • You may only select one of these subjects as a main choice: French, Spanish



Humanities

Select only 1 subject from Group Humanities

Choice 1

Select Item

Save for later Next →

- **Your child will be sent a form to complete via their school email.**
- **They should log onto their email at home to complete the form with you.**
- **There are 4 steps to work through.**
- **You cannot edit the form so only complete it when you are sure of your subject choices!**



Please check your subject order of preference before submitting. [Set Preference](#)

Humanities [Select only 1 subject from Group Humanities](#) [Edit](#)

Geography [Preference 1](#)

Creative & Language [Select only 1 subject from Group Creative & Language • Select exact 1 reserve subjects from Group Creative & Language](#) [Edit](#)

Art Graphics [Preference 2](#)

R1. Product Design [Reserve](#)

Open Choice [Select 2 subjects from Group Open Choice • Select exact 1 reserve subjects from Group Open Choice](#) [Edit](#)

Geography [Preference 1](#)

Health & Social Care [Preference 4](#)

R1. Religious Studies [Reserve](#)

✖ Rule not met: A subject can only be selected once as a main or reserve choice

A form can only be submitted once and cannot be changed later. If you would like to modify it, use the Save for later button. If you go back, the preferences will be reset. You may need to check the preferences again

[Previous](#) [Save for later](#) [Submit](#)

- This form cannot be submitted as Geography has been selected twice



Please check your subject order of preference before submitting. [Set Preference](#)

Humanities [Select only 1 subject from Group Humanities](#) [Edit](#)

Geography [Preference 1](#)

Creative & Language [Select only 1 subject from Group Creative & Language • Select exact 1 reserve subjects from Group Creative & Language](#) [Edit](#)

Art Graphics [Preference 2](#)

R1. Product Design [Reserve](#)

Open Choice [Select 2 subjects from Group Open Choice • Select exact 1 reserve subjects from Group Open Choice](#) [Edit](#)

Sports Studies [Preference 3](#)

Health & Social Care [Preference 4](#)

R1. Religious Studies [Reserve](#)

A form can only be submitted once and cannot be changed later. If you would like to modify it, use the Save for later button. If you go back, the preferences will be reset. You may need to check the preferences again


[Previous](#) [Save for later](#) [Submit](#)

- This form can be **submitted** now the mistake of selecting Geography twice has been corrected



Please check your subject order of preference before submitting. [Set Preference](#)

Humanities [Select only 1 subject from Group Humanities](#) [Edit](#)


Geography  [Preference 1](#)

Creative & Language [Select only 1 subject from Group Creative & Language • Select exact 1 reserve subjects from Group Creative & Language](#) [Edit](#)

Art Graphics [Preference 2](#)

R1. Product Design [Reserve](#)

Open Choice [Select 2 subjects from Group Open Choice • Select exact 1 reserve subjects from Group Open Choice](#) [Edit](#)

Geography  [Preference 1](#)

Health & Social Care [Preference 4](#)

R1. Religious Studies [Reserve](#)

 **Rule not met: A subject can only be selected once as a main or reserve choice** 

A form can only be submitted once and cannot be changed later. If you would like to modify it, use the Save for later button. If you go back, the preferences will be reset. You may need to check the preferences again

[Previous](#) [Save for later](#) [Submit](#)

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Please check your subject order of preference before submitting. [Set Preference](#)

Humanities [Select only 1 subject from Group Humanities](#) [Edit](#)

Geography [Preference 1](#)

Creative & Language [Select only 1 subject from Group Creative & Language • Select exact 1 reserve subjects from Group Creative & Language](#) [Edit](#)

Art Graphics [Preference 2](#)

R1. Product Design [Reserve](#)

Open Choice [Select 2 subjects from Group Open Choice • Select exact 1 reserve subjects from Group Open Choice](#) [Edit](#)

Sports Studies [Preference 3](#)

Health & Social Care [Preference 4](#)

R1. Religious Studies [Reserve](#)

A form can only be submitted once and cannot be changed later. If you would like to modify it, use the Save for later button. If you go back, the preferences will be reset. You may need to check the preferences again

[Previous](#) [Save for later](#) [Submit](#) 

- This form can be submitted now the mistake of selecting Geography twice has been corrected

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Completing the Form

- **What if you change your mind?**
You must wait until the deadline for the form to be completed has passed (23rd February) and then see Mr Collins in the Central Academy Office
- **What if I start a subject in September and I am not enjoying it?**
You have until **Monday 5th October** to change your mind and swap to another subject



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Finally....

- We want students to make the **right** choices!
- Speak to teachers about subjects you are interested in tonight – (DT/Art in classrooms)
- Ask teachers for more information in class
- Email teachers if you have any questions

Deadline for form to be returned – **23rd February 2026**

