



Year 8 Curriculum and Options Choices:  
Information Evening  
Tuesday 1st October

Mr Wharton – Deputy Head  
Mrs Brunning – Assistant Headteacher  
Mrs Brown Head of Achievement

## Our overarching aims:

- To ensure that pupils follow a tailored pathway through KS4, appropriate to their interests and abilities
- To ensure that pupils continue to follow a broad and balanced curriculum so that they have the base from which to specialise later in life

# The National Context

- GCSEs are linear with terminal exams
- 'Rote' learning is an expectation
- SPAG (spelling, punctuation and grammar) marks are included in the majority of subjects
- No coursework – some Controlled Assessment remains
- No national curriculum levels
- Significant emphasis on Mathematics and English
- GCSE grading system from 2017: 9-1 replaces A\*-G for all subjects



# The GCSE Grading System

- Grades 9 to 1 (high to low)
- The Government has established that a grade 4 is a 'standard pass' and a grade 5 a 'good pass'
- Most Post 16 providers ask for a number of minimum 'standard passes' - but dangerous to aim for, and 'settle' for, a grade 4

## What the pupils said....

Year 9 feels a little bit different because we are starting our GCSEs

The beginning of Year 9 'was good but, you know, seen better'

Year 9 'feels unique like you are on a treacherous sea trying to stay afloat from the challenges to come ahead

'The work feels harder and more thoughtful'

The beginning of Year 9 'is alright if you just get your head down and work'

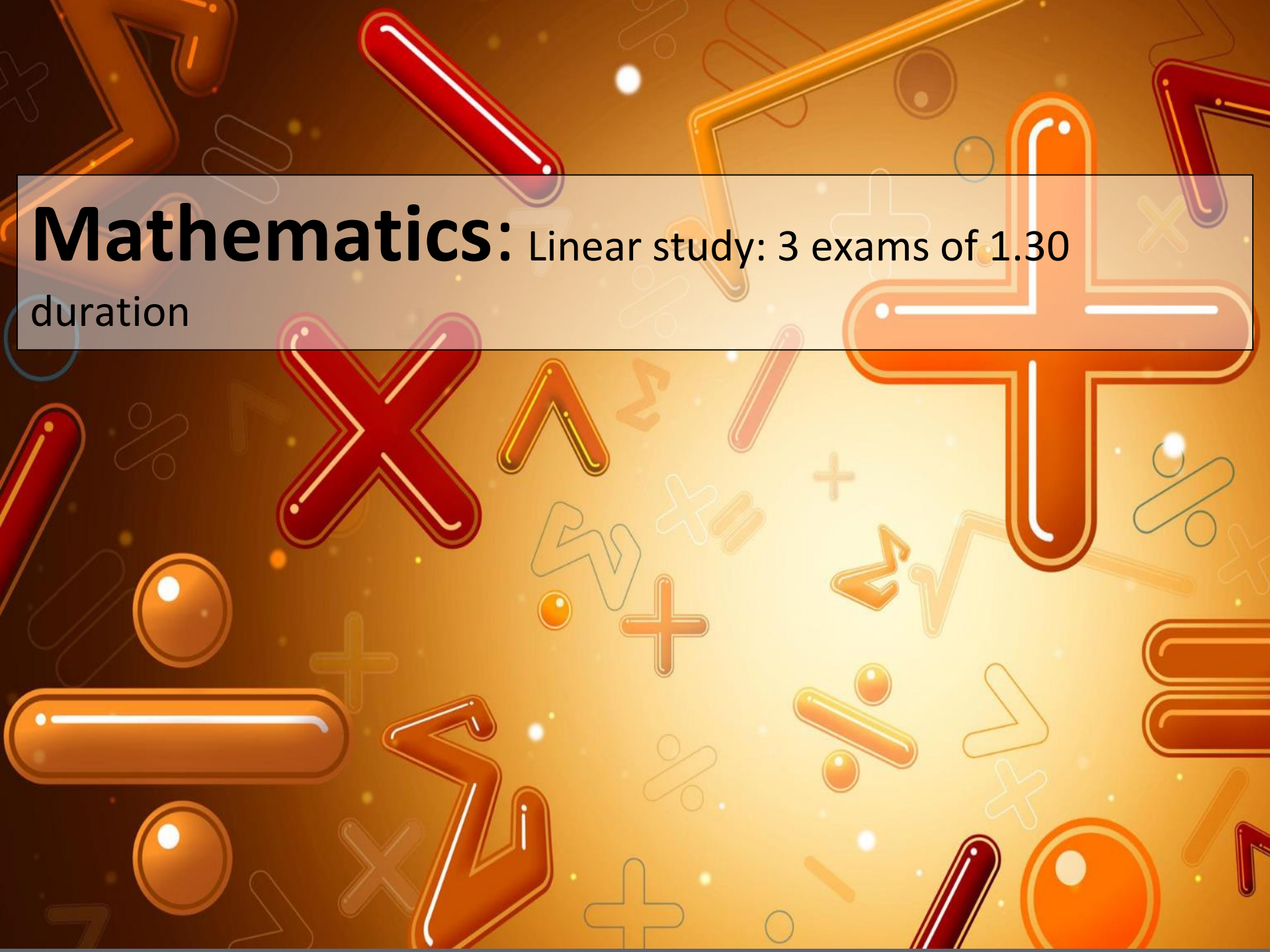
'I think the leaflet you provided to us explained everything about choosing options'



## Year 9 onwards:

### Core for all pupils:

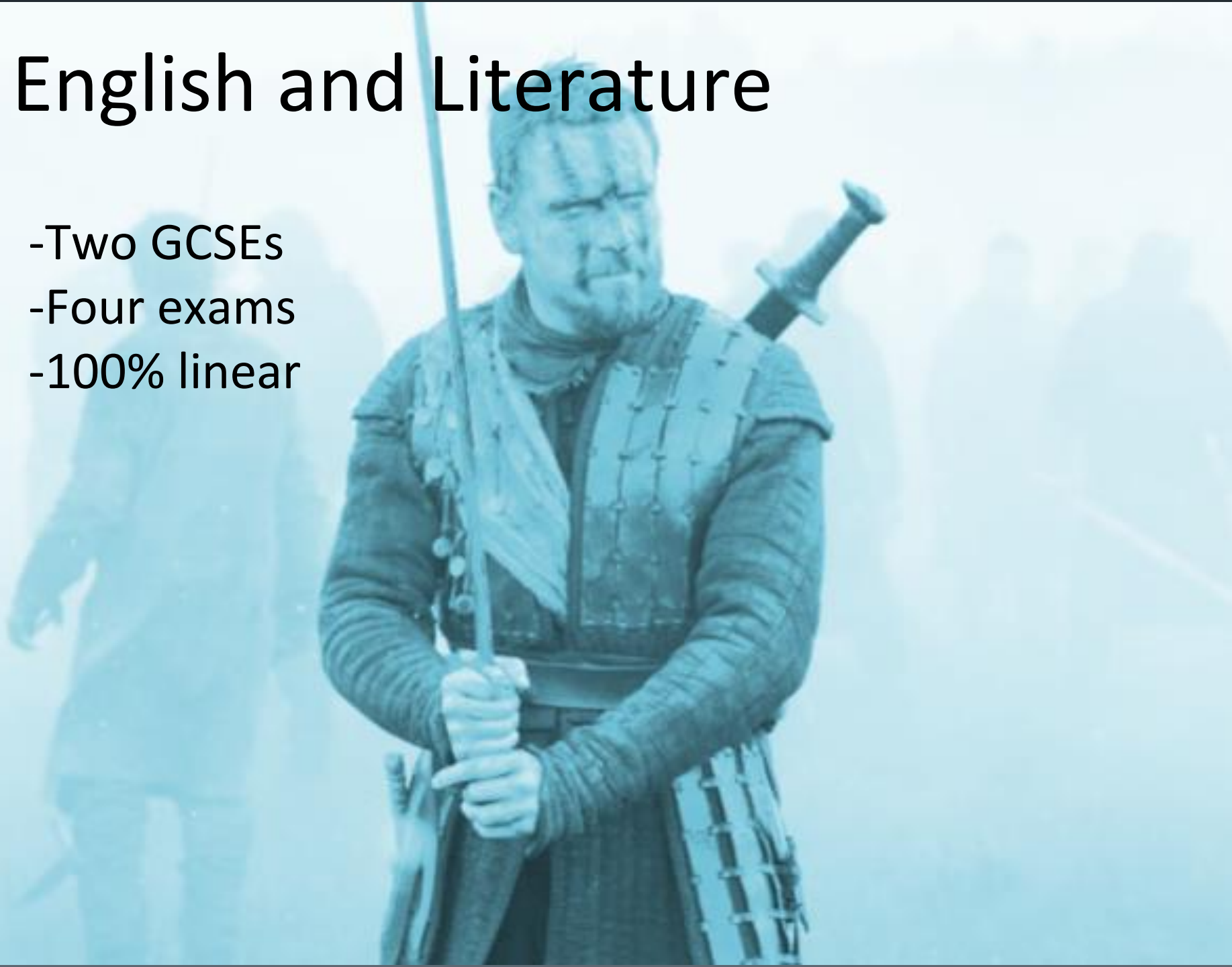
- Mathematics
- English/English Literature
- Science
- ICT
- PE

The background is a vibrant, golden-yellow gradient with a dense pattern of various mathematical symbols. These symbols, including plus signs, minus signs, multiplication signs, division signs, and percentages, are rendered in a 3D, glossy style with highlights and shadows, giving them a metallic or plastic appearance. Some symbols are larger and more prominent, while others are smaller and more faded. The overall effect is a busy, energetic, and mathematically-themed visual.

**Mathematics:** Linear study: 3 exams of 1.30  
duration

# English and Literature

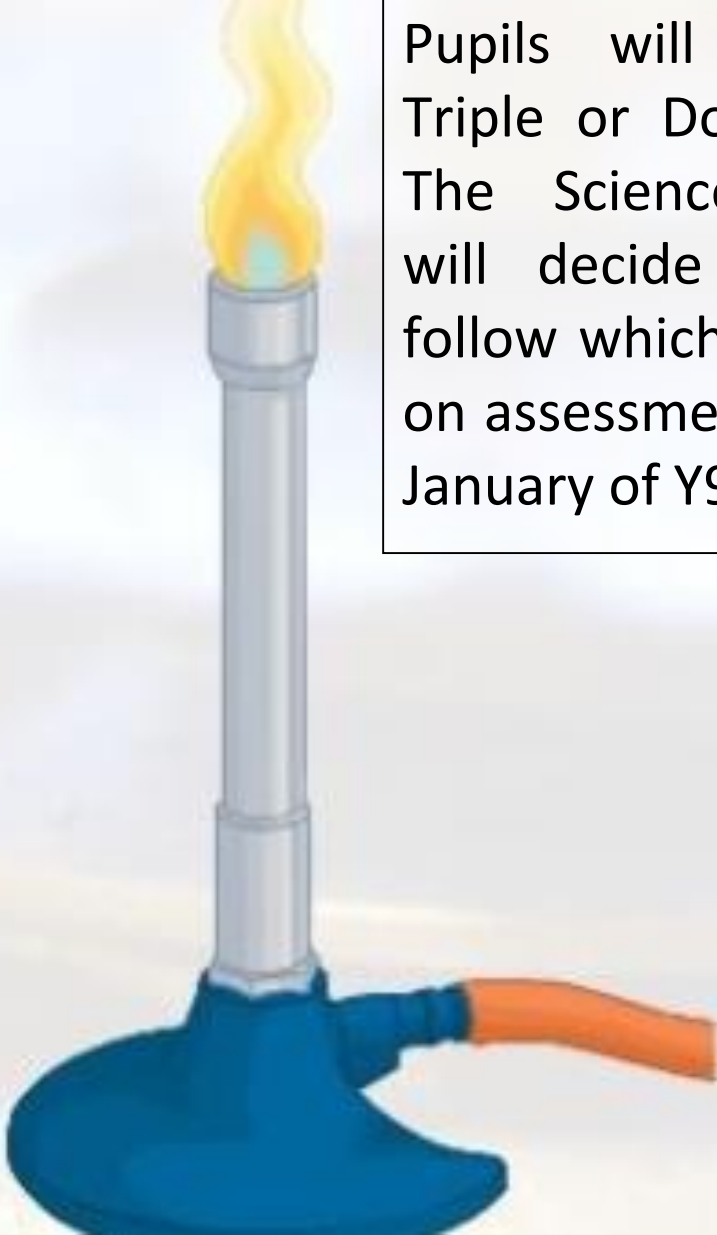
- Two GCSEs
- Four exams
- 100% linear





# Science:

Pupils will study either Triple or Double Sciences. The Science department will decide which pupils follow which course, based on assessment data around January of Y9.





**PE:** All students will continue to have lessons of core PE. Sports Studies and GCSE PE are options



**Humanities:** The majority of pupils will need to choose a Humanities subject – History or Geography



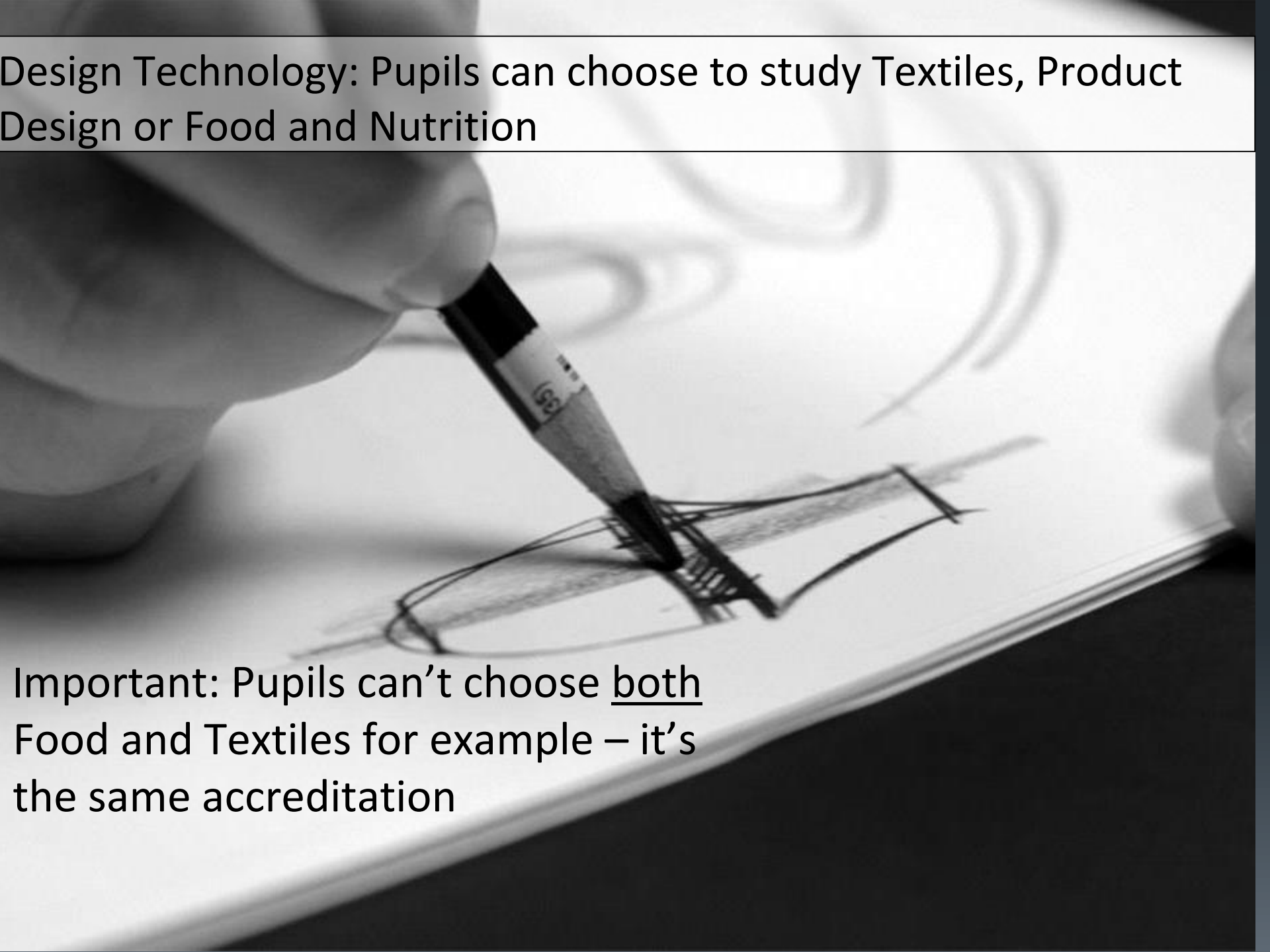
**MFL:** The majority of pupils will continue to study Language at GCSE level



Some pupils will have the opportunity to study more vocationally based subjects:

- Child Development: OCR National
  - Health and Social Care: BTEC
  - Sports Studies: OCR National
  - Travel and Tourism: BTEC
  - Digital I.T.: BTEC
- Both OCR Nationals and BTECs are Level 2 qualifications
- 

Design Technology: Pupils can choose to study Textiles, Product Design or Food and Nutrition

A black and white photograph showing a close-up of a hand holding a black marker, drawing a sketch on a piece of paper. The sketch appears to be a technical drawing of a mechanical part, possibly a gear or a component of a machine. The hand is positioned on the left side of the frame, and the marker is pointing towards the center. The paper is white, and the background is dark and out of focus.

Important: Pupils can't choose both Food and Textiles for example – it's the same accreditation

**Art/Photography:** Similarly, pupils can't choose both Art and Photography for the same reason





# An Extensive Range of Extra-Curricular Experiences

Year 7 Kathakali workshop  
March 2022



# Decision Making

- Important principles:
  - Beginning to think about subject choices from now
  - Not choosing a subject because their friends are doing it
  - Not choosing a subject because they like the teacher
  - Not choosing a subject in which they already have had difficulties – e.g. not regularly bringing their kit to PE, not bringing ingredients for Food Technology

# How can parents help?

- Encourage your child to make positive choices based on his/her engagement and success with the subject.
- Encourage your child to consider potential career areas and what subjects may be relevant.
- Emphasise the importance of accurate 'SPAG' and good handwriting in all curriculum areas.
- Explain the importance of subjects over which there is no choice, e.g. Maths
- 'Keep up the pressure' on homework and reading.
- Make your child aware that it is rarely possible for students to change options once the timetable is established.

# Support for Students



- November – ‘Future Choices’ Assembly
- December (onwards) – options and careers discussed during the Tutor Programme
- January 2025- Tutor/Parents’ evening
- January 2025 (onwards) – discreet IAG/careers lessons as part of PDL
- January 2025 - Y8 Careers Day
- Early March 2025 – ‘Taster’ lessons/experiences of option subjects`
- 6th March - Options Fayre
- March 2025 - Options booklets issued
- 13th March 2025 – Y8 Options Information Evening
- 31st March 2025 – Options choices (Google Form) returned
- June/July 2025 – Finalisation of options groupings



Thank you