



Year 8 Curriculum and Options Choices:
Information Evening
Thursday 2nd October

Mr Wharton – Deputy Head
Mrs Brunning – Assistant Headteacher
Miss Hawkins - 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
- 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'

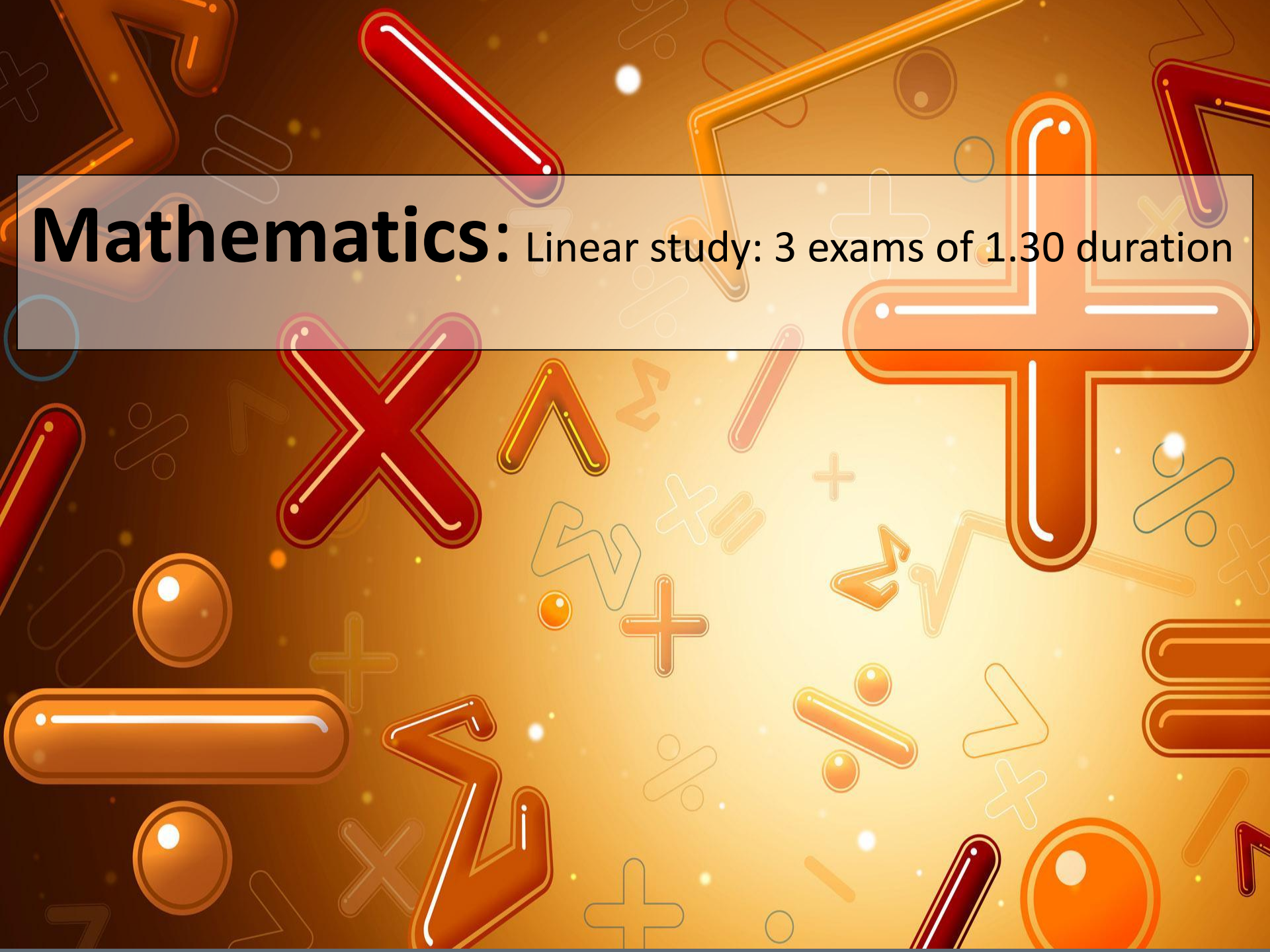
'I think the leaflet you provided to us explained everything about choosing options'



Year 9 onwards:

Core for all pupils:

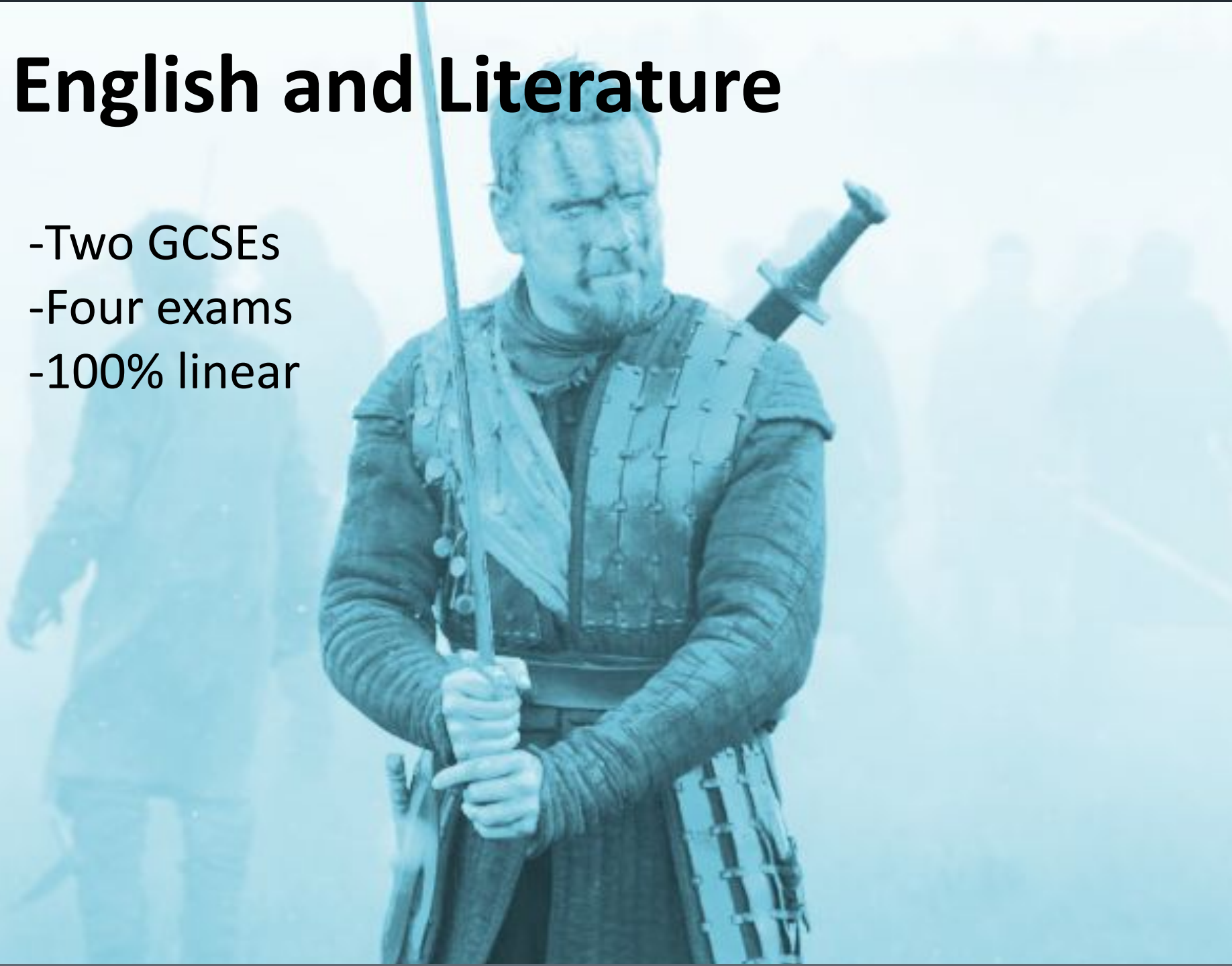
- Mathematics
- English/English Literature
- Science
- ICT
- PE

The background is a vibrant orange and yellow gradient, densely populated with various mathematical symbols. These include large, stylized plus signs, minus signs, multiplication signs, and division signs in shades of red, orange, and yellow. There are also smaller, fainter symbols like percentages and exponents scattered throughout. The overall aesthetic is bright and energetic, typical of a modern educational presentation.

Mathematics: Linear study: 3 exams of 1.30 duration

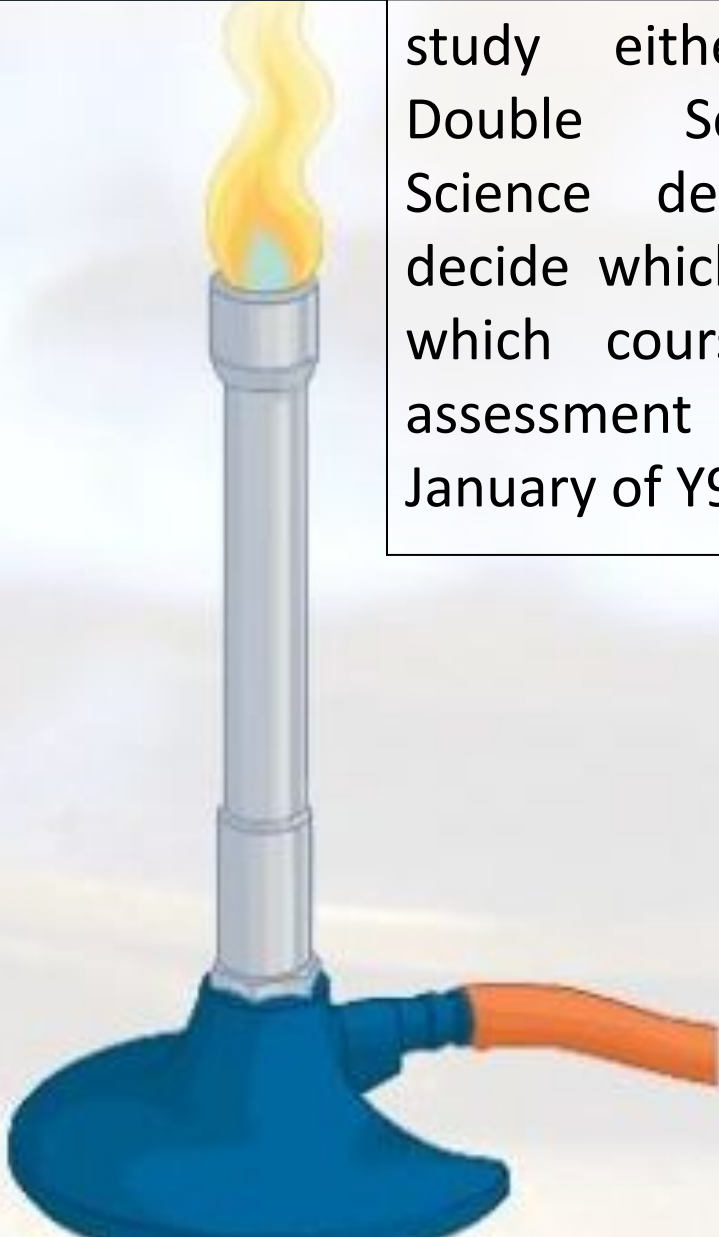
English and Literature

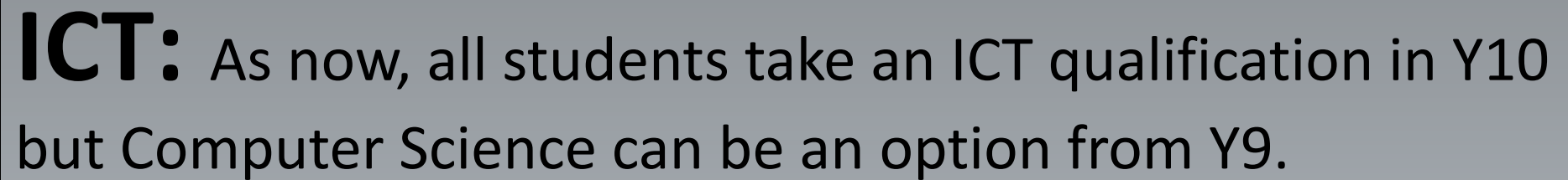
- Two GCSEs
- Four exams
- 100% linear



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

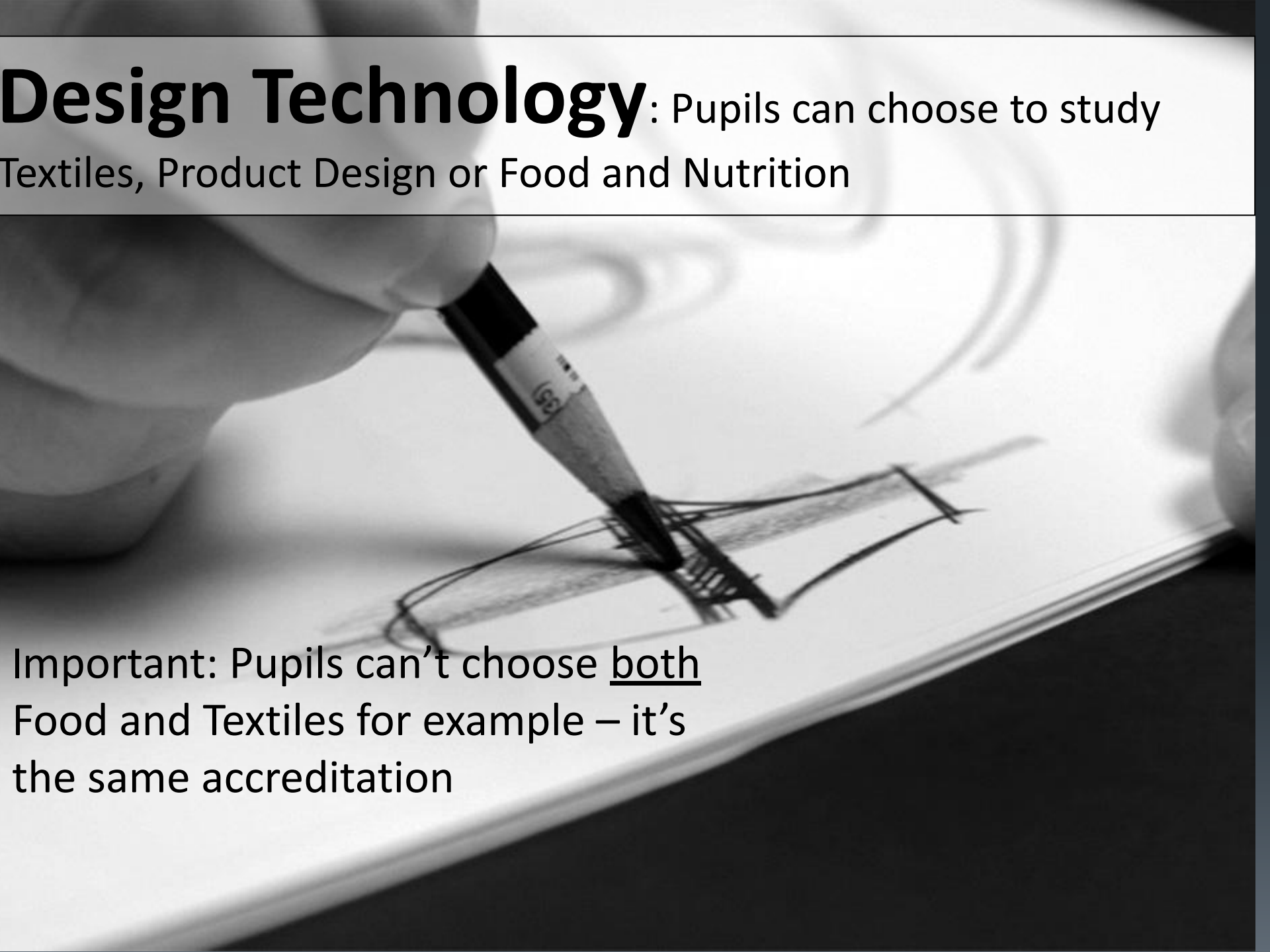


MFL: The majority of pupils will continue to study Language at GCSE level



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

A black and white photograph showing a hand holding a black marker, drawing a sketch of a boat on a piece of paper. The sketch is a simple line drawing of a boat's hull and deck. The background is slightly blurred, showing some faint circular patterns.

Design Technology

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

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 just 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 2026- Tutor/Parents’ evening
- January 2026 (onwards) – discreet IAG/careers lessons as part of PDL
- January 2026 - Y8 Careers Day
- 26th February 2026 – Y8 Options Information Evening (2)
- Early March 2026 – ‘Taster’ lessons/experiences of option subjects`
- March 2026 - Options Fayre
- March 2026 - Options booklets issued
- 26th March 2026 – Options choices (Google Form) returned
- June/July 2026 – Finalisation of options groupings

Thank you

