

October 2009

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**Subjects:** listed in separate booklet

# GUIDED CHOICES

## TO ALL STUDENTS:



This booklet is to help you make your choice of subjects for your Year 10 and Year 11 Courses. Before you begin to make your choices please:

- 🌀 Read the booklet carefully
- 🌀 Talk to your parents, your careers advisor, your subject teachers and your Curriculum Specialists

I have to do these subjects for the next 2 years!!!

What sort of a job would I like?

I need to make the right choices

I must do some subjects... others I can choose

What subjects do I like? What subjects am I good at?

A variety of subjects would be more interesting



# PARENTS – WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!

## WHY ???!!

- Year 10 and 11 subject choice is a very important step along the road to future education and careers
- You know your child better than anyone
- There have been changes in recent years in qualifications, subjects and routes

This booklet is to help your child decide, with your help, the pattern of their education over the next two years. These decisions are important to keep routes through higher education and future career opportunities as flexible as possible.

## PLEASE:

- Read this booklet carefully with your child
- Make use of the advice available from our Connexions Personal Advisor Ms Walker, and other staff
- Listen to what your child has to say

If you have any queries, do not hesitate to contact Mrs Kendrick, Mrs D Ratcliffe or Mrs S Cotton at school

Telephone - 01422 883213

Fax - 01422 881876

This booklet will also be posted on the school website:

[www.calderhigh.org.uk](http://www.calderhigh.org.uk) – Students link – guided choices at Key Stage 4.

### Key Dates:

Information Evening – **Tuesday 13 October** (Parents only)

Subject Review Evening – **Tuesday 24 November 2009**

Information and Guidance Day – **Tuesday 1 December 2009**

# KEY STAGE 4 GUIDED CHOICES

All students study the core subjects:

- English Language and English Literature 2 GCSEs
- Mathematics 1 GCSE
- ICT 2 – 4 GCSEs
- RS short course (except Media students) ½ GCSE
- Science
- Design Technology subject (chosen from the subjects available)
- PE
- Learning for Life

Students can choose one subject from each option block – **A B C**

Some BTEC courses must be chosen in 2 option blocks.

- The BTEC courses are equal to either 2 or 4 GCSEs in which you can achieve Pass, Merit or Distinction equivalent values to grade A\* to C
- These qualifications can lead to A Level courses and to a degree
- All these courses are assessed via coursework and tests rather than a traditional exam at the end of Year 11
- Visits and trips are an important part of these courses
- Triple award science is for the most able scientists

Note: Students do **not** need Triple award science to progress to level 3 Biology, Physics and Chemistry.

Students may also have the opportunity to choose Construction, Hairdressing, Beauty Therapy and Motor Vehicle Maintenance. These courses are operated off site eg Calderdale College, Himmat.

Students must see Mrs Cotton (Admin 3) if they wish to study any of the above courses.

**It is important to note that it is very difficult to change once students have committed to a course. For off site provisions, school pays additional fees for the specialist training and equipment. Parents will need to cover any transport costs between home and college. Students will train in a work environment and need to be responsible and mature.**

# STUDENTS – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



## **Who do I see to get more information and advice?**

- Your subject teachers for information on specific subjects
  - Curriculum specialists – you will be allocated to a member of staff who is very experienced in curriculum and timetabling. You (and your parents if they are available) will meet with them on the Information and Guidance (IAG) Day
  - Your form tutor for general advice
  - Ms Walker – your Connexions Personal Advisor
- If you're still unsure:
- Mrs Kendrick – Year Achievement Leader
    - Mrs A Clay – Raising Achievement Mentor
    - Ms Jenkins – Raising Achievement Mentor
    - Mrs D Ratcliffe – Deputy Headteacher
    - Mrs S Cotton – Assistant Headteacher



## **Have I collected all the information I need?**

- Check your Connexions Booklet “Directions” and with your Connexions Personal Advisor - Ms Walker



## **What are the deadlines?**

- You will need to hand your choices sheet in on **Tuesday 1 December 2009** (Information and Guidance Day)



## **Can I do the same subject as my friends?**

- This is not a good basis for making your decisions. Your friends will probably go into a different career and enjoy different subjects from yourself. What are YOU good at? How do YOU learn best? What do YOU enjoy?
- Also, friends often choose the same subjects and then find they are in different groups anyway.



## **Do I have a complete free choice of any subjects?**

- Subjects are arranged in 'blocks' you may find that subjects you

wish to study clash. You will have to decide which subject you prefer to study.

- Some courses are for more able / less able students and may not be appropriate with you.
- Some courses will not run if numbers are low. If a course is over subscribed there may be a selection process usually by interview and reference from your Curriculum Specialist.
- Some routes will enable you to achieve success – we will encourage you to select certain subjects



**Can I change my mind?**

- It is a possibility before April, but it is highly likely that courses will be full.



**Can I drop a subject if I don't like it during the two years?**

- **I'm afraid not.** Once you're timetabled for a course, there will be no alternative provision. Make the right choices now!



**Will this subject support what I want to do as a job in the future?**

- See your Connexions Personal Advisor - Ms Walker



**Do I have to go on the trips and visits?**

- If you don't go on the visits, you will miss out on important information for your assessments. If you don't enjoy trips and visits, choose subjects which don't involve these activities.



**Will this subject lead to Sixth Form qualifications?**

- See your curriculum specialist, Mrs Ratcliffe, Mr Howard, Mrs Cotton or Mrs Healey



**Will any of the subjects cost me?!**

- Most of the materials needed for the courses are provided by the school, however in practical subjects you may have to purchase individual materials for yourself. Revision guides may also cost a little, and there will also be a cost for trips/visits.

# PARENTS – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



## **Why do you offer the range of choices at Key Stage 4?**

- To give a balanced curriculum and cover all areas in order to keep options open Post 16 and for future careers.



## **What are the different qualifications? Do they have the same value and points to enable students to progress to Post 16?**

- Applied and Traditional GCSEs are graded A\*-G
  - Level 1 = Grades D - G
  - Level 2 = Grades A\* - C
- BTEC First Diploma Pass, Merit and Distinction are equivalent to 4 GCSEs A\*-C.
- BTEC First Certificate Pass, Merit or Distinction are equivalent to 2 GCSEs A\*-C
- Diploma in Creative and Media is equivalent to 7 GCSEs level 2 (Higher) or 5 at level 1 (Foundation)
- In some cases a student will be entered in an Entry Level / foundation learning tier course if the teacher feels that this will achieve success in the qualification.



## **My son/daughter has already expressed an interest in a particular career. Who can they talk to?**

- Make an appointment with Ms E Walker, our Connexions Personal Advisor.



## **Will we have an opportunity to discuss various options with subject staff?**

- Yes at both the Subject Review Evening on 24 November and Information and Guidance Day on 1 December 2009.



## **Why can't my son/daughter study what they like at school from now on?**

- All schools have limits on the courses they offer. The subjects all have to be timetabled and the staffing provision covered.



**My son/daughter wants to choose two subjects that are in the same list. Can they still choose them?**

- No. They will be timetabled at the same time. However, make a note of this on your form.



**Will all the courses run that are listed?**

- We hope so. However it will depend on the number of students who subscribe and the staffing available. If a course can't run, then your son/daughter will be interviewed by a member of staff and you will be informed.



**What happens if my son/daughter changes their mind about their career and subsequent courses chosen?**

- This may be possible just after the forms are handed in, however by **April** all the timetabling and group assignment will have begun and the likelihood of being able to change courses will be far less. We encourage a broad choice of subjects to be chosen, so at this stage your son/daughter will not be too specialised in one area.