

# Key Stage 4

## Choosing your options

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**Key Stage 4  
Options Evening  
Thursday  
15th January 2026  
5-7.00pm**



**DRONFIELD HENRY FANSHAWE SCHOOL**

*Established 1579*

## Core Subjects and Pathways

### Compulsory Core Subjects

At Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School, we are passionate about all of our students studying a fully rounded curriculum. Therefore most students must, by law, study the National Curriculum containing statutory core subjects. These are:

**English Language and Literature, Mathematics,  
Science Combined Award, Core PE, PSHE,  
Relationships and Sex Education,  
Core ICT, RE, Citizenship.**

### Pathways Within Year 10 and 11.

Pathway choices are made by the school using a wide range of educational data. This allows us to make a considered educational decision based on a student's individualised and personalised needs. This decision is made with a view to maximise their potential success in the future.

#### Blue Pathway

Blue Pathway students will follow an English Baccalaureate curriculum that includes a humanities subject and a modern foreign language. This will mean a choice between History or Geography. For languages, students can choose between German, French or Spanish. In some circumstances, we may be able to support requests to study a second Humanities or MFL subject as an option. Many Russell Group and Competitive Universities expect languages to be studied in order to facilitate university level study later.

#### Green Pathway

Some students will be offered the Green Pathway. This provides the opportunity to study a further Humanities, and a further option instead of a language.

#### Please note:

Green Pathway students can still choose a Modern Foreign Language.

Pathway choices will be communicated to students, parents and carers early in Term 2.



## Options Subjects

In addition to the compulsory core curriculum subjects, most students will choose additional optional subjects from our curriculum areas. These are:

### Computing & Business

- GCSE Computing
- Level 2 Creative iMedia
- GCSE Business Studies

### Creative & Expressive Arts

- GCSE Art & Design
- Level 2 Technical Award Performing Arts (Drama specialism)
- GCSE Film Studies
- GCSE Music
- GCSE Photography

### Humanities

- GCSE Geography
- GCSE History
- GCSE Religious Education

Please note: all students must choose either History or Geography

### Modern Foreign Languages

- GCSE French
- GCSE Spanish
- GCSE German

Please note: all Blue Pathway students must choose one MFL subject

### Physical Education

- GCSE PE

### Science

- GCSE Triple Science.

Please note: all students will study the Combined Science Course. Triple Science offers a three GCSE course, rather than a two GCSE course

### Technology

- GCSE D&T: Timber Specialism
- GCSE D&T Art Textiles Specialism
- GCSE Engineering
- GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition



# Our Curriculum Statement

DHFS promotes a broad and balanced curriculum that provides opportunities for an individual to gain a rounded education. Through experiencing the curriculum, students develop knowledge, understanding and skills that enable them to thrive throughout life and develop a love for learning and which will enable them to continue their personal journey beyond DHFS and live a happy, safe and successful life.

The curriculum enables students to leave school fully equipped for the modern world so that they are able to contribute as a positive citizen within the immediate and wider community. It promotes care, independence, responsibility, resilience, reflection and innovation and aims to encourage students to be ambitious and forward-thinking so they can make a worthwhile contribution to society. The curriculum enables students to progress, develop, grow and realise their highest aspirations.

The school believes in providing a range of options so that students can specialise in their chosen areas of progression and interest of academic, creative, expressive and vocational subjects that prepare them for a fulfilling life beyond DHFS. Pathways exist for students to follow either within school or to make the most suitable next step in education, employment or training elsewhere. The school promotes alternative pathways for those students who benefit from a tailor made approach and a nurture curriculum for those that have additional needs.

Importance is placed on personalised information, advice and guidance, which spirals throughout the curriculum to enable students to make the right choices for them at the right time.

Emphasis is placed on a curriculum that enables horizons to be widened and promotes engagement, creativity and enjoyment. There is a passionate belief in providing diverse and rich opportunities and encouraging all students to step up and actively participate in what is on offer.

Beyond the subject curriculum we promote participation in a wide variety of extra-curricular and enrichment activities encouraging full participation in the different opportunities that are available. The school places great value on students experiencing a curriculum that develops the fullest knowledge of the world around them so that they develop their cultural capital and thereby have an awareness and an active responsibility for the global environment in which we live.

Underpinning the curriculum is a culture of critical reflection on designing and developing the different elements that make up the educational experience for students, so that the school can realise its vision and students can become the best versions of themselves that they can be.



# Our Vision Statement

Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School strives to provide a high-quality educational experience for all students, through an enriching curriculum that enables them to acquire a deep knowledge of the world in which they live so that they can develop a love for learning and can thrive personally, economically and academically, in life. The school aims to engage and inspire the students of today, from Y7 to Y13, to grow and develop into rounded citizens that become positive, caring and successful members of society and are equipped to become the leaders of tomorrow.

## Core Principles

The following core principles embody the ethos of Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School and the learning environment that we aim to achieve:

Develop students into happy, caring, healthy, confident, courteous, articulate and independent learners with a strong moral compass, who can succeed in life

Ensure students demonstrate the DHFS 3Rs by being responsible, resilient and reflective

Offer a broad and balanced curriculum that is inspiring, motivating, challenging and relevant for all abilities and prepares students for their role as future citizens of the world

Allow students to experience lessons of the highest quality delivered by dedicated and highly skilled professionals

Equip students with the necessary skills, knowledge and values to make outstanding progress, in the broadest sense throughout their school journey, irrespective of starting point and celebrate and encourage high aspirations both in and out of the classroom

Deliver care, guidance and pastoral support for all students so that they are safe within a well ordered and disciplined environment

Celebrate what makes us unique through embracing diversity and equality of opportunity, promoting the DHFS family through respect and acceptance

Develop strong relationships with parents and carers so that an active triangle of partnership exists between student, school and home

Work with students, parents, carers and the community to ensure a sense of pride and care in Dronfield and the wider area



# Options Timeline

## Term 2 November

- Issue of the options literature and student pathways
- Pathways queries - Deadline Term 3
- SEND Support

## Term 3 - January

- Launch GCSE Options - our digital system
- Key Stage 4 Options Evening
- Discussions with Mr Pickles or the House Teams
- Parent, carer, student and teacher discussions
- SEND Support

## Term 3 February

- Interviews for some Year 9 students with Mr Pickles or the House Team
- Individual discussions with students, parents and carers where necessary
- Digital submission of the option forms
- SEND Support

## Term 4 & 5 March and April

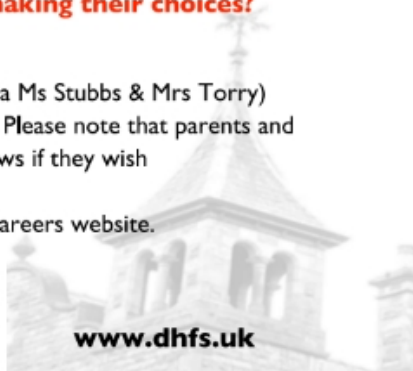
- Option choices are timetabled by the school to check viability and to maximise student choice. This is a complex procedure where in the past we have been able to meet the requests of over 99% of students

## Term 6

- Option choices and decisions are made available to students and parents
- Key Stage 4 commences in our Transition Week, July.

## Where can students get extra advice before making their choices?

- The Key Stage 4 options evening
- House Teams, School Learning Support staff (via Ms Stubbs & Mrs Torry)
- The school careers service - Progress Careers. Please note that parents and carers are encouraged to attend careers interviews if they wish
- Mr Pickles, Assistant Headteacher
- Careers booklets, newsletters and the school careers website.





Can I change my mind in September?

This is difficult to achieve. Please remember that between the February deadline date and September we are working behind the scenes on the timetable, collating teaching groups and maximising everyone's chances of getting exactly what options they request. Therefore, you must spend significant time now in making the right decisions.

What is a BTEC, is it of a lower quality than a GCSE?

No! This is a common misconception. A Level 2 BTEC is of the same quality and standing as a Level 2 GCSE. This is the same in Year 12 with Level 3 BTEC and A Level courses. BTEC courses are simply a different way of learning and studying a subject. Many include coursework and examination, eg iMedia, just like GCSE does.

I know already what I want to choose, what do I do now?

Excellent! However, you would be surprised how often we hear this and then learn that students have changed their mind! Please still spend the time to consider all of the options. How can you say that a subject is not right for you if you haven't looked at the videos or the leaflets? Ensure that all of your decisions are well informed and based on you.

I'm not sure about my final option, any advice please?

Contact the careers team, or your House Team at school. You may need to reflect on what subjects you need for the future, or to keep your options open if you are undecided as to where your career is taking you. We can also arrange a careers interview for you with our impartial advisors.

Can I have a careers interview with my parents/carers?

Yes, definitely! All Year 9 have received a booking link. Parents and carers are encouraged to take part in this process.

Im not sure about my final option, any advice please?

Contact our careers advisers via Mr Pickles in school. You may need to reflect on what subjects you need for the future, or to keep your options open if you are undecided as to where your career is taking you.





What is the difference between the Blue and Green Pathways?

The only difference is that Green Pathway students have one more free option choice, with the Blue pathway students having to choose a compulsory language option.

How are Pathways chosen?

The school has assessed each individual's position. This includes advice and feedback from the House Team, pastoral considerations, the SEND team, their teachers and wider colleagues. In addition to this, we have examined past and current achievement data. This has given us a collective viewpoint on the most appropriate pathway for each student.

Can I change Pathways?

In the past, some students have asked us if they can change pathways. Due to the extent and breadth of the initial pathway assessment, any change in pathways is unlikely. In exceptional circumstances, the school are willing to listen to your views however, with Mr Cooper making the final decision regarding pathway placement.

Any Pathway queries must be made by the end of Term 2, via Mr Pickles. Decisions regarding any queries will be communicated by the end of February.

Can I study MFL if I am on the Green Pathway?

Yes! This is definitely an option for some students. All students have the option to choose MFL if they are on the Green Pathway. However, we have a duty to check that it is an appropriate course for you to undertake.

Will I be with my friends in class?

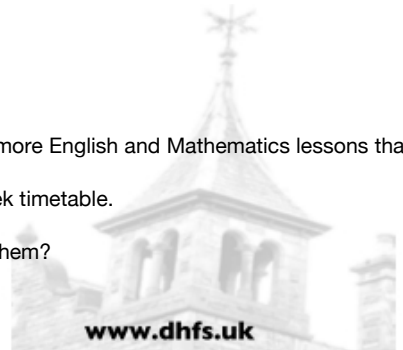
Due to setting, and how the timetable works with options blocks, it is possible that you will not be with your current teaching groups in Year 10. This is necessary in Year 10 and 11, and is valuable, as it puts you in the best teaching group for your circumstances.

How many lessons a week will I have in each option?

This can vary according to the subject. For example, you may have more English and Mathematics lessons than your options. Options subjects receive five lessons over the two-week timetable.

Can I change my options before the deadline even if I have entered them?

Yes, you can edit your choices at any time up to the deadline.



a guide to  
**Key Stage 4**



**DRONFIELD  
HENRY FANSHAWE  
SCHOOL**

*Established 1579*

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