

**YEAR 8 OPTIONS
GUIDE FOR PARENTS
AND CARERS**

Guidance for Options

The option choices your child makes will be important for their future. To help them make the right choices they will need to find out about the subjects they are interested in they will need to get information from the following people:

1. Form Tutor
2. Parents or Carers
3. Subject teachers
4. Teachers from subjects that they have not studied but are interested in.

To try and help your child make maximum progress and be successful in years 9, 10 and 11 the school provides a wide range of study options, some of which will provide more support for learning than others. It is important that your child chooses courses that will allow them to make the best progress, achieve the best exam results and enjoy the learning opportunities that will help them to be successful.

Your child's exam results at the end of year 11 will be critical in determining what kind of study course they progress onto in the sixth form at Stoke Newington School.

The new GCSE courses introduced from September 2015 will have a different grading system of 1 to 9 with a grade 9 being an A**. We expect nearly all our students to gain a minimum of five (9)A* to (5)C grades by the end of year 11 with the majority of students achieving many more than this. We expect more than 35% of students to achieve at least three A and A* grades (new grades 7, 8 and 9) and around 15% of students will achieve nearly all their grades at A and A* (grades 7 to 9).

To further help your child make the best choice of subjects and help them progress into an appropriate course post-16 and then onto university, we will be using a guidance process that looks at academic progress since joining Stoke Newington School. The starting point will be student levels on entry from primary school and their progress through year 8. The aim of this process is to provide all students with a curriculum offer that has the appropriate level of support and challenge and that allows every individual to successfully manage their learning in years 9, 10 and 11.

We recognise that every young person is different and we have a small number of students who will need additional support to get five (9) A* to (5)C grades or reach their target grades. There are also another small number of students who will need a lot of support to get to 5 (9)A* to (1) G grades at GCSE or through another equivalent course.

We have set up a number of suggested pathways to help support students make the correct choices for decisions into post-16 education.

We have four routes into Options

1. The Triple Science Pathway is for students that want to do A levels in Science subjects. They might be thinking about a career in medicine, engineering, science, scientific research or mathematics.
2. The Core 1 Pathway for all students who will want to go to university but as yet are unsure what they might want to do. This has two sciences and two EBacc subjects.
3. The Core 2 Pathway is for students that might want to go to university to study an arts, design or performance based course and has one compulsory EBacc Subject.
4. The supported pathway is for young people that have had support in classes throughout their time in school and where we feel that they cannot successfully complete a GCSE or BTEC Course.

We will not let students make choices that are seen as unrealistic or inappropriate.

This is a time of major changes to exams at GCSE, BTEC and A Level GCE for students aged 14-19. There are also major changes to school accountability measures and how results will be reported.

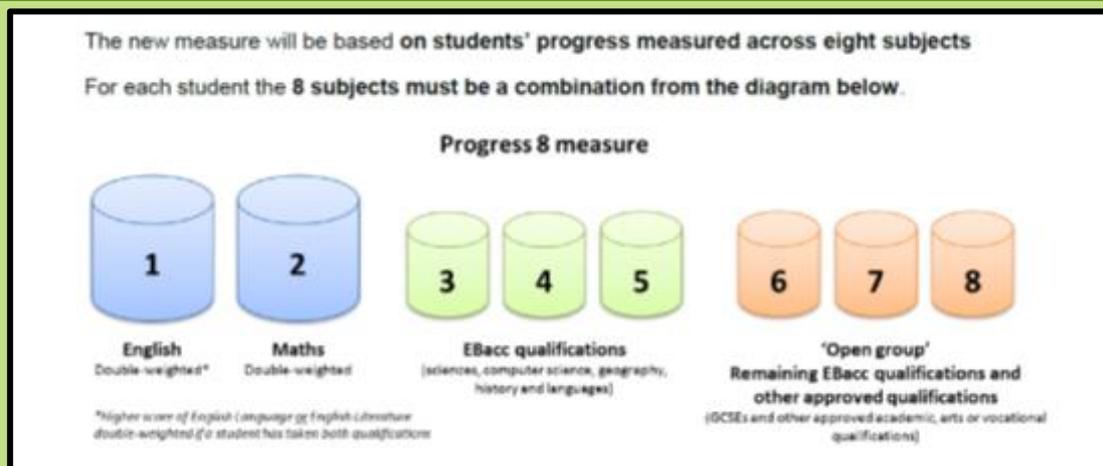
All GCSE courses are being reformed but this is happening over a three year period with all students having started new GCSE courses in maths and English Language and English Literature in September 2015. Most other GCSEs such as history, geography, modern foreign languages, sciences, and the arts will be taught from 2016 with media studies and all of the technology subjects starting teaching in September 2017.

What's different?

1. The new GCSE courses have a different grading system instead of A* to U which is the current GCSE grades it is being changed to Grades 9 (A**) 8 (A*) 7 (A) 6/5(B) 5/4 (B/C) down to 0 being U or fail.
 - a. The new benchmark pass grade will be grade 5
2. The new GCSE courses will not have coursework unless there is no other way of effectively assessing students largely this will be applied or practical courses such as Art, Music, PE GCSE and Technology subjects.
3. Only maths will have tiered exams. This is where students will sit different exam papers with access to separate different final grades. Currently: Higher grades A* to D or Foundation B grade to G. All other subjects will have a unified paper with access to the full grade set of A* to G or 1 to 9.
4. End of GCSE exams are generally going to be longer and students will have more of them.
5. All exams have to be taken at the end of the course there are no modular examinations.

Information and Guidance for Parents and Carers

6. The school accountability measures have also changed and will no longer be percentage of A* to C including maths and English. Instead the measures will reflect a much more holistic approach to student progress and attainment, these are called Progress 8 and Attainment 8 which will look at a basket of subjects across the student's learning.



The Progress 8 measure is designed to encourage all students to study a broad and balanced curriculum. The new measure will be based on students' progress measured across eight subjects. For each student the 8 subjects must be a combination from the diagram above.

The Progress 8 score will always be determined by dividing the points total by 10 (the eight qualifications with English and mathematics counting double), regardless of how many qualifications your child sits. This average point score will then be placed against a national average score based on the progress of all students with the same end of KS2 result for English and maths. If the student has achieved higher than the national average score they will receive a plus grade if they achieved below the national average, they will receive a negative grade.

As an example, Jayda arrived in year 7 with a KS 2 maths and English average of 5.2

English & maths Double weighted		EBAC Subjects			Next best three results			Not counted
Maths	English	Combined Science		History	Art	Graphics	Spanish	English Lit
A	B	B	B	B	A*	A	B	C
14	12	6	6	6	8	7	6	5

Jayda has a score of 65. Based on her KS2 results, she would be expected to get 61.

Attainment 8 Score	Minimum Progress Score from end of KS2 (year 6)	difference is	Progress 8
65 B+	61	+4	0.4

Jayda has made almost half a grade better progress per subject than her minimum expected

Information and Guidance for Parents and Carers

Each student will also leave Stoke Newington with the following information:
Attainment 8 – showing the pupil's average achievement in the same suite of subjects as the Progress 8 measure.

- English and mathematics – If your child achieved grade 5 grade or better in both English (either Language or Literature) and mathematics.
- The EBacc – If your child achieved good grades (9 to 4) across a range of academic subjects

Students' Progress Grade (average of 8 grade)	Students' Attainment grade (average of 8 grades)	Achieved Maths and English at C grade or better	Achieve EBacc subjects at C grade or better
0.4	B+	Yes	Yes

Raising the Participation Age and Sixth Form Study

Students starting year 11 in September 2016 will be expected to remain in full time education, training or an approved programme of work and training such as an apprenticeship until they are at least 18 years old.

It is important to think about progression into sixth form, and indeed into higher education. It becomes even more important that students make the best choice of subjects for them in KS4 and that they are successful in achieving the minimum five grades 9 to 5 grades including maths and English by the end of year 11.

The changes to the GCSE exams means that students will have to work consistently across year 9, 10 and 11 to be properly prepared for their final exams at the end of year 11.

There will be increased pressure on sixth form places around London and in Hackney because of raising the participation age. The sixth form at Stoke Newington School has grown in numbers and is becoming increasingly successful. It is ranked in the top 10% of sixth forms in England with some subjects ranked in the top 2%. This success has led to increasing pressure for places; in September 2016 we recruited over 200 students into year 12. The new sixth form block provides excellent study and communal areas that make it an even more attractive place to study.

As a successful sixth form we are increasingly popular with our own students but also with the external recruitment of students that have been at other schools. Last year we were in a position of having to turn students away because we were full on the basis of first applications.

We want to make sure that our own students have first choice to stay in our School's sixth form, but this does mean that they will need to meet the admissions criteria. This is currently 5 (9)* to (5) including maths and English and as a general guide, a minimum of a (6) grade in the subjects that they choose to study in the sixth form.

The standard progression pathway from 16 into university is to complete a course of four GCE AS levels in year 12 and three GCE A2 levels.

Information and Guidance for Parents and Carers

To progress into a top university such as University College London, London School of Economics, Oxford or Cambridge, AS and A2 exams will all need to be passed at A or A*. Most universities currently require minimum of B grades at A Level.

In some specific subject areas it is possible to progress to university with a BTEC Level 3 course and one A Level in a supporting subject; the BTEC Level 3 Sport course would be well supported by A level psychology, biology or another academic A level. In the past students have gained a Distinction in their BTEC and a good grade in an A level (C or better), such as biology they have gained entry to a prestigious sport degree course at Bath or Loughborough universities.

Many A level and BTECs depend upon you having studied particular subjects at GCSE. As a general rule you if you want to study a subject at A level, it is advisable to choose it at GCSE if it is available. You should be aiming to pass it with a minimum of a grade 6. For more detailed information please look at our current *Stoke Newington School Sixth Form Course Directory* which is available on the sixth form page of our website.

In terms of progression into higher education, if you are aiming to go to a good university you should aim to study two facilitating subjects at A level, these are:

- Maths and Further Maths
- English (Literature)
- Physics
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Geography
- History
- Languages (Classical and Modern)

It is very important to understand that not taking at least two of these subjects at A level will significantly reduce your chances of securing a place at a top university. For more detailed information please look at the Russell Group's '*Informed Choices*' document which is available online.

Careers in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects such as medicine, pharmacy, engineering or a science specific degree will be better supported by following a triple science course at GCSE generally you need to achieve grades 6 to 9 to be able to study a science A Level such as chemistry.

You can move into science A levels: physics, chemistry or biology by successfully completing the combined science courses as long as you achieve grades 6 to 9

To find out more about University you can use the guides:

<http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/>

<http://www.theguardian.com/education/ng-interactive/2014/jun/03/university-league-tables-2015-by-subject>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/student/into-university/az-uni-colleges/>

Qualifications ladder

Levels	Academic General Qualifications	Vocational qualifications - work ready qualifications	Work based /skills Qualifications
5	Honours Degree		
4	Degree	Higher National Diploma Higher National Certificate Higher Level Apprenticeship	Foundation Degree NVQ 4
3	A Level GCE	BTEC Nationals Award, Cert & Diplomas Short courses	NVQ 3
		Advanced Apprenticeship	
2	GCSE 9-4	BTEC Firsts Diplomas & Certificates Short courses	NVQ 2 Work Skills
		Apprenticeship	
1	GCSE 3-1	BTEC Introductory Diplomas & Certificates Short courses	NVQ 1 ALaN ESOL Work Skills

Examples of Student Progression

Ahmed (Triple Science Pathway)

Ahmed is clear that he wants to go university to study medicine. He knows that to get into a top university he needs to have a balance of subjects but understands that it will help him if he chooses at least two facilitating subjects. He is choosing triple science and he will need to choose one other EBacc subject. He wants to continue Spanish at GCSE and history at GCSE and he knows that this will leave him with only one other option choice.

- This will mean that Ahmed is studying all the subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate and will still have one other subject choice.
- He started in Year 7 with KS2 results of 5 in English, 5 in maths and is secure in progress in all of his subject areas

Ahmed has the odd day off because he has quite severe asthma but in general his punctuality and attendance are excellent.

Ahmed is a very talented musician, although he is generally good at everything. He chooses triple science, Spanish, history and music.

Ahmed will be studying nine GCSE courses in KS4

English Language GCSE	English Literature GCSE	Maths GCSE
Biology GCSE	Chemistry GCSE	Physics GCSE
History	Spanish	Music

Non GCSE courses will be PE and PPP.

If Ahmed knows that it is important to have good or outstanding progress and he must get grades 7 and 8, 9 in all his subjects. This is even more important because he wants to go Oxford, Cambridge or a Russell Group University to study medicine.

Amy (Core 1 Pathway 2 sciences and 2 EBacc subjects)

Amy is clear that she wants to go university but because she has strengths and weaknesses in different subjects she knows that she has to build on her strengths.

She enjoys languages so she wants to continue with French. Her strongest subjects in school are PE, and technology and she particularly likes graphics. She has talked to her PE teachers and likes the sound of the GCSE PE. She thinks that graphics will be good but she knows that she needs to study another EBacc subject and likes the idea of computer science which she thinks will work well with graphics.

Amy started school with KS2 results of 4 in English, 4 in maths. Amy has made expected progress and is secure in maths and English.

Amy has excellent attendance and punctuality.

Amy has decided that she will choose GCSE French, GCSE computer science, GCSE PE and GCSE graphics. Amy has looked at some careers web sites and sees that with these choices she could go into an area like games design or if she gets a 7 or above in maths she could think about studying architecture at university.

Amy will be studying nine GCSE courses

English Language <i>GCSE</i>	English Literature <i>GCSE</i>	Maths <i>GCSE</i>
Science Core <i>GCSE</i>	Science Additional <i>GCSE</i>	GCSE PE
French <i>GCSE</i>	Computer Studies <i>GCSE</i>	Graphics <i>GCSE</i>

Non GCSE subjects in PE, PPP.

Amy will need to achieve grades 6 to 9 in all of her subjects if she is to get into a top university. Her results in maths and English are particularly important for her progression into Post 16 and then on to university.

Adam (Core 2 Pathway)

Adam has moved school, he got into trouble in year 7 and came to Stoke Newington for a fresh start. Adam had a KS2 score of 3 in English and 4 in maths but with missing some school and moving he has not made the progress that would have been expected of him.

Adam likes practical learning and he enjoys art, drama, PE and technology; he quite likes languages but is worried that because he missed so much school he will struggle if he chooses Spanish in Year 9. Adam gets on well with his teachers but still has too much time off school. His current progress check shows he is only judged beginning in both English and maths.

Adam has very mixed progress checks his attendance is below 85% and his effort grades tend to be 2 and 3.

Having completed his self-assessment Adam chooses to do subjects that will allow him to do a lot of practical course work.

Adam chooses to do drama GCSE, graphics GCSE, art GCSE and Spanish GCSE, this means that Adam will be studying nine courses GCSE courses.

English Language <i>GCSE</i>	English Literature <i>GCSE</i>	Maths <i>GCSE</i>
Science Core <i>GCSE</i>	Science Additional <i>GCSE</i>	PE <i>GCSE</i>
Graphics <i>GCSE</i>	Art <i>GCSE</i>	Spanish <i>GCSE</i>

Non GCSE subjects in PE and PPP.

This means that Adam will be able to have a range of subject choices in the sixth form if he gets the appropriate GCSE grades of at least 4 to 9 in the majority of his subjects and at least a new grade 4 or 5 in maths and English.

Aisha (Supported Learning Pathway)

Aisha has had support in her lessons since she started school. Aisha needs support when reading any long pieces of text and struggles with numbers. She can add simple sums but struggles with numbers above 20. Aisha has very low KS2 scores because she was largely assessed as working towards a level or at Level 2.

Aisha loves school and has a really good group of very supportive friends but sometimes struggles in lessons because she finds many of her lessons too difficult.

Aisha has very good progress checks. Her behaviour, effort and homework are always 4 but her subject progress is judged beginning.

Aisha has had help to complete her self-assessment and she has chosen to do subjects that will allow her to do subjects where she is well supported.

Aisha chooses to do the Art supported study course for two options, English and maths additional support and Level 1 IT non GCSE course. Aisha will be studying a mixture of GCSE and non-GCSE courses that will help her make progress into a post-16 course.

English approved programme of study	English Literature GCSE if appropriate	Maths supported study GCSE if appropriate
Science Core approved programme	<i>Art and Photography supported study</i>	<i>Art and Photography supported study</i>
	L1 IT Non GCSE	<i>Drama GCSE</i>

Non GCSE subjects in PE and PPP.