

Holmer Green Senior School

GCSE Options Evening

Thursday 19 March 2026



We'd like to extend a warm welcome to you all...



6:00pm

Options Guidance Presentation



6:20pm

Visits to subject areas



8:00pm

End of event

Holmer Green Senior School

Headteacher's Address

Thursday 19 March 2026



Our 2026 Curriculum Offer

Core Subjects- compulsory				
Mathematics	English Language English Literature	Triple Science- Biology, Chemistry and Physics		Religious Studies

Humanities- choose 1	
History	Geography

Options Subjects- choose 2				
Art*	Textiles*	Photography	IT**	Computing**
Food Technology	Design Technology^	Construction^	Child Development	Music
Drama	PE	Business Studies	Sociology	French
Spanish				

Non-examined subjects- compulsory rotations				
PSHCE	PE (Core)	Oracy	Study Skills	Computing

Please take a look at the curriculum offer we have in place for you.

Every student will undertake lessons and qualifications in the core subjects named in the first table. This is no different to any other cohort nationally. Maths and Science continue to have a tiered entry system (Higher or Foundation) and all students will be entered for triple science – again at either a Higher or foundation level. These tiers are decided once mock exam data has been collected in Year 11.

Looking at the second table it becomes clear that students will have to choose between History and Geography. Students can select both if desired as they both appear as options in the third table.

The third table outlines the other options available to all students. Everyone must select two of these options to move on with. This means each student will have selected three options in total.

The final table outlines the other elements that will make up the curriculum time across Year 10 and Year 11. This includes a continued programme of core PE

lessons and a timetabled period of PHSCE.

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SIMS Online

Please note it may not always be possible to give you your preferred choice.

You have chosen 1 of 1 courses and 1 of 1 reserves from this list

Geography GCSE Full Course Reserve History GCSE Full Course Reserve

Options

Please choose two options and two reserves. We will try our best to give you at least one of your first choices, but it may not always be possible to give you both first choices. If you would like to choose a language, it must be the one you have been studying. Please note: Informatio is Information Technology.

You have chosen 2 of 2 courses and 2 of 2 reserves from this list

Art GCSE Full Course Reserve Bs St GCSE 9-1 Full Course Reserve Construction & Built env Cambridge Nationals Certificate Level 1 & 2 Reserve

Ch Dev. Cambridge Nationals Certificate Level 1 & 2 Reserve Computing GCSE Full Course Reserve Drama GCSE Full Course Reserve

Design Tech GCSE Full Course Reserve Food Techn GCSE Full Course Reserve French GCSE Full Course Reserve

Geography GCSE Full Course Reserve History GCSE Full Course Reserve Informatio Cambridge Nationals Certificate Level 1 & 2 Reserve

Music GCSE Full Course Reserve Physical E GCSE Full Course Reserve Spanish GCSE Full Course Reserve

Textiles GCSE Full Course Reserve

My Reserves in Order of Preference (Total Reserves: 3)

To change your order of preference select a choice and click the position in the list you would like to move it to.

- 1 Geography GCSE Full Course Humanities
- 2 Food Techn GCSE Full Course Options
- 3 Spanish GCSE Full Course Options

To change your order of preference select a reserve and click the position in the list you would like to move it to.

- 1 Physical E GCSE Full Course Options
- 2 Design Tech GCSE Full Course Options
- 3 History GCSE Full Course Humanities

All option choices will be made using our SIMS software.

All students have access to this platform – it is where they check timetables, attendance, achievement and behaviour points. When they log in, they will see a tile called ‘SIMS Options’.

When clicked, it will provide access to the selection process – which looks exactly like what you can see here.

Students should make their options choices by clicking on the subject name.

This will turn their option choice a nice shade of blue. In total, there should be three blue subjects highlighted, with ticks appearing to show that the correct number of selections have been made. This student has selected Geography, Food Technology and Spanish. **CLICK THE ARROW**

Student should then select a total of three ‘reserve’ subjects, by clicking the ‘Reserve’ button next to each subject name. Reserve choices will turn Orange. These are picked as a back up should class size maximums be reached. This

student has selected History, D&T and PE as reserves **CLICK THE ARROW**

Again, a green tick appears if the correct number of reserve selections are made. Your overall choices are then displayed on the right hand side of the screen.

CLICK THE ARROW

To save your selections, you must click the save button at the top-left hand corner of the screen.

To support you with this process, a simple instructional outline can be found on the school website.

Parents/carers will need to login to their accounts to sign off on all Options choices. Again supporting documentation for this can be found on the school website.



SIMS Online

Save Show Notes Hide Notes

It may not always be possible to give you your preferred choice.

You have chosen 1 of 1 courses and 1 of 1 reserves from this list

Geography GCSE Full Course Reserve History GCSE Full Course Reserve

This course is also available in Options This course is also available in Options

Options

Please choose two options and two reserves. We will try our best to give you at least one of your first choices, but it may not always be possible to give you both first choices. If you would like to choose a language, it must be the one you have been studying. Please note: Informatio is Information Technology.

You have chosen 2 of 2 courses and 2 of 2 reserves from this list

Art GCSE Full Course Reserve	Bs St GCSE 9-1 Full Course Reserve	Construction & Built env Cambridge Nationals Certificate Level 1 & 2 Reserve
Ch Dev. Cambridge Nationals Certificate Level 1 & 2 Reserve	Computing GCSE Full Course Reserve	Drama GCSE Full Course Reserve
Design Tech GCSE Full Course Reserve	Food Techn GCSE Full Course Reserve	French GCSE Full Course Reserve
Geography GCSE Full Course Reserve	History GCSE Full Course Reserve	Informatio Cambridge Nationals Certificate Level 1 & 2 Reserve
Music GCSE Full Course Reserve	Physical E GCSE Full Course Reserve	Spanish GCSE Full Course Reserve
Textiles GCSE Full Course Reserve		

My Reserves in Order of Preference (Total Reserves: 3)

To change your order of preference select a reserve and click the position in the list you would like to move it to.

- 1 Geography
GCSE Full Course Humanities
- 2 Food Techn
GCSE Full Course Options
- 3 Spanish
GCSE Full Course Options

- 1 Physical E
GCSE Full Course Options
- 2 Design Tech
GCSE Full Course Options
- 3 History
GCSE Full Course Humanities

Your overall choices are then displayed on the right hand side of the screen.

To save your selections, you must click the save button at the top-left hand corner of the screen.

To support you with this process, a simple instructional outline was sent out to you alongside the letter inviting you to tonight's event.



Forbidden Choices



Art and Textiles



Design Technology and Construction



IT and Computing

You must be aware that students will not be able to select the following subject qualifications.

The Arts and Computing subjects are too similar, meaning that they cancel each other out when it comes to qualifications. Whilst the DT/Construction subjects do not cancel each other out, spaces in these subjects is limited.



Curriculum, Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Feedback Policy



Oversubscription

All students listed



Random selection

Two staff present.
Selections continue until correct class size is in place



Reserve allocation

Students added to waiting list in order of withdrawal

You should be made aware that whilst we work hard to achieve a 100% allocation rate for option choices, we may have to allocate reserve options to some students.

This was the case last year, and will likely be the case this year.

The process by which this is undertaken can be found in the Policy named on the screen, however in a nutshell, a random generator is used to select students to move to a reserve subject. This student is then placed on a waiting list and allocated a place should one become available.

In recent years, we have found that places become available across the remainder of the school year and into the start of the next academic year.



Our broader offer: extra and co-curricular opportunities



Prefect Roles



SuSu



Silver DofE



Sports Teams



Inclusion Mentor



School Show



Enrichment



Student Council

As Mr Hillyard has already mentioned this evening, your academic progress in Year 10 and 11 should be complimented by getting involved in a wide range of extra and co-curricular opportunities.

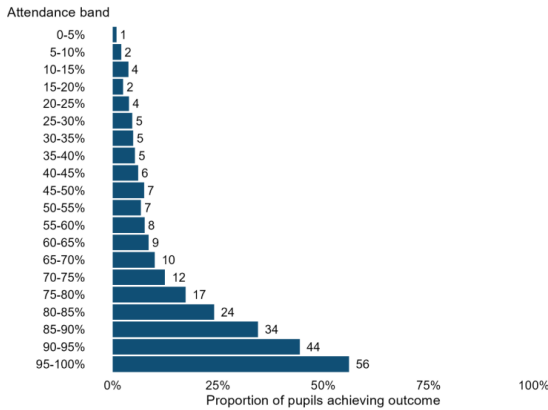
Outside of subject intervention, there are a plethora of opportunities for you. Take part in as many of these opportunities as you can. They provide excellent opportunities to develop and hone the wider social, organisational and communication skills you will need for the ever-changing contemporary world.

These opportunities also help to ensure each child can become the very best version of themselves.



Attendance

Figure 6 Proportion of pupils in each 5% attendance band for Year 11 achieving Grade 5 or above in English and Maths GCSE at the end of KS4



A student with 95-100% Attendance is **1.9** times more likely to achieve a grade 5 in GCSE English and Maths than a student with 90-95% attendance

They are **three times** more likely to achieve a grade 5 in English and Maths than students who attend 85-90% of the time

Ten days off in Year 11 reduces the likelihood of achieving a grade 5 in English and Maths by 50%

I'd also like to reiterate another of Mr Hillyard's points from his address – this time the importance of good attendance.

Earlier this month, the DfE published a new report outlining the impact of poor attendance on academic outcomes. The results of their study speak for themselves.

As I say to every child in our weekly notices, their attendance really does matter. Each day off they have makes achieving the best grades they can that little bit harder. Being the best version of yourself, means turning up every day. That is what we expect of everyone.



Timeline...



19 March

Options Evening & Materials on Website



20 March

SIMS Options opens, Curriculum materials on website



26 March

Options selection deadline

The timescale for decision-making can be seen on screen.

Obviously, we are all currently at the top event at which you can talk to staff and ask questions. However, every Head of Subject has also put together a short video that outlines the nature of every option available. These are already on our school website and I will show you a QR code in a second or two for you to be able to access them.

SIMS Options will open tomorrow morning. Students will be able to make selections from then on. Parents and

carers can then access these choices and approve them – this will be done using the parent/carer SIMS app login.

The deadline for all choices to be made will be a week today.

We will confirm options with you all after the Easter break.



Top Tips...



What you are good at



What you enjoy



Independently



Breadth and balance



The future 'You'

The five top tips should be considered when thinking about your options.

I think that they are pretty self-explanatory, however lets just think about each of them.

Doing what you are good at and what you enjoy usually means that you work hard and challenge yourself to be even better – that's the perfect recipe for success at GCSE. With that in mind, picking your options independently of your friends is crucial – choosing the same options as them could be a disaster – especially if you don't like one of the subjects.

Having a balanced set of options, by that we mean a mix of practical and non-practical subjects may be right for you. Think about the blend of subjects too – do they compliment each other?

Lastly, think about the future you – what do you want to do after school has finished? Aside from the core subjects, what of our options will likely help you get there?



Subject visits...

Geography	G2
History	H3
Sociology	H2
French	L4
Spanish	L4
D&T	T2
Construction	T2
Child Development	T4
Hospitality and Catering	T3

Music	MU1
PE	PE1
Drama	Drama Studio
Business	T7
I.T.	T7
Computing	T7
Art	A3
Textiles	A3

Ms. Dass	Dining Room
Mrs Matthews (Careers)	Dining Room
Mr Khalid	Prayer Room

You each have a handout that informs you of where you need to visit to have subject specific conversations.

We have no guides for you tonight as your children know here they are going – or at least they should do! If you do lose your way members of the Senior Leadership team will be dotted around the site to answer questions and point you in the correct direction.

Other key staff are also on site tonight – your Head of Year, Mr Zacharek will make his way from here to the Dining Room. Joining him will be our Careers Lead, Mrs Selleck and our SENDCO, Mrs Wilson. Both are on hand to answer any questions you may have.

Our multi-faith prayer room is also open this evening for the breaking of fast. Mr Khalid will be located in this space for those of you who would like to use it.



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Ok, so that concludes our presentation for this evening.

We hope that the conversations you have with subject staff are productive and provide you all the opportunity to consider the options you have moving forward.

So as to ensure that we don't have a crush in the corridor, we will start dismissing you through two separate doors – please bear with us whilst we do.

Thank you so much for your time – have a great evening. Thank you