



KING EDWARD VI HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

GCSE Options Process and Curriculum Details

2026 - 2028

Introduction

Our curriculum offering for pupils in Thirds – Upper Fourth is intentionally broad, and subject choices are kept to a minimum. In the Lower and Upper Fifth, the majority of pupils will study ten subjects, seven of which involve some element of optionality.

Core

All pupils will study English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, a modern language and at least two sciences.

(Please note that our expectation is that the majority of pupils should continue to study all three sciences, particularly if they are considering a career in engineering, medicine, pharmacy or veterinary science, or if they are unsure about their future career plans: we would not want them to limit their future choices. There may be valid reasons for some pupils to choose just two of the three sciences; if this is the case, we would be happy to discuss this with the pupil concerned and their parents.)

Options

In addition to English Language, English Literature and Mathematics, pupils choose **seven** subjects from the following list, including at least one modern language and at least two sciences:

Art & Design	History
Biology	Latin
Chemistry	Mandarin
Computer Science	Music
Design Technology	Physical Education
Drama	Physics
French	Religious Studies
Geography	Spanish
German	

Classical Greek

GCSE Classical Greek is offered as an eleventh subject; lessons take place time outside of the regular timetable (before and after school and at lunchtime).

Free Standing Mathematics Qualification

Pupils may also choose to study the Free Standing Mathematics Qualification (FSMQ) - an additional mathematics qualification, which is taught within timetabled GCSE Mathematics periods and is examined at the end of the Upper Fifth. All pupils who are considering A Level Mathematics will be required to complete this course (although they do not have to sit the examination; however, all pupils considering A Level Further Mathematics must sit the examination). Please note that pupils do not need to make any decisions at all regarding this until after they have started their Lower Fifth year.

Additional Qualifications

We are unable to support any additional GCSEs other than Classical Greek and FSMQ as outlined above. However, we can support private candidate entry for heritage/native language GCSEs (but cannot provide any teaching).

Timetable

The school tries to meet the choices of all pupils; indeed, it designs the timetable around the options chosen by the pupils, which is unusual. **However, we cannot guarantee that every subject combination will be possible.** If we cannot offer a pupil's preferred subject combination, we will inform them as soon as possible to enable them to make an alternative choice.

Moreover, if the number of pupils opting for a particular subject is very low, the course may not viable: in this case, this GCSE option **will not run**. Once again, we will inform pupils if it becomes clear that this is likely to be the case so that they can make an alternative choice.

Wider Curriculum

All pupils in the Lower Fifth also study the following subjects:

- Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE)

- Enrichment
- Physical Education

Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE)

This course is studied throughout the Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth.

The PSHE curriculum follows the statutory guidance for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). The curriculum has three strands: health and wellbeing; relationships and living in the wider world.

The overarching aims of the PSHE curriculum are to:

- promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school
- prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life in wider society

The intended outcomes of the PSHE programme are:

- to help pupils know and understand themselves, show empathy and the ability to work with others, enabling them to form and maintain healthy relationships
- to equip pupils to live safe, productive, capable, responsible, healthy and balanced lives
- to provide opportunities to reflect on and clarify personal values and attitudes and explore the complex and sometimes conflicting range of values and attitudes they encounter now and will in the future
- to develop essential skills for future employability and better enjoy and manage their lives
- to build their confidence, resilience and self-esteem, and to identify and manage risk, make informed choices and understand what influences their decisions

Content:

Health and wellbeing:

- Emotional wellbeing and mental health
- Independence

Relationships:

- Respectful and healthy relationships of all kinds
- The law on sex, relationships and young people
- Sexual health and consent
- Families, pregnancy and marriage
- Addressing extremism and radicalisation

Living in the wider world:

- Careers and financial decision-making
- Influence

Physical Education

The aim of the Physical Education curriculum in the Lower and Upper Fifth years is to give the pupils an opportunity to experience and try out a range of skills and techniques appropriate for different sports. Our curriculum includes lifesaving, leadership skills, yoga and effective use of the fitness suite; sports involved include basketball, volleyball, indoor rowing, badminton, rounders, and tennis.

Our aim is to provide pupils with a holistic education in sport. Pupils are encouraged to work with their peers and to try out various roles within a sporting context - from coach to official.

Please note that, whilst all pupils study our core Physical Education curriculum, GCSE Physical Education is also available as an option subject.

Upper Fourth Option Choices 2026-2028

Timetable of Key Dates

January

- Deputy Head (Academic) speaks to the Upper Fourth in the Lecture Theatre
- The GCSE Choices Information Evening will be held on **8th January 2026**. (This will be a remote meeting/webinar)
- A letter will be sent home with details of the options and a link to an electronic option form (a Microsoft Form).
- There will be an introduction to the new language offered at KS4 (Classical Greek). This will take place in Latin lessons.
- The Upper 4th Parents' Evening on **20th January 2026** will provide an opportunity to discuss progress generally and also any issues relating to option choices. (This will be an in-person meeting)
- Deadline for the completion of the GCSE Option Choices (Microsoft Form): **Monday 2nd February 2026**.

February

- Information will be given to Form Tutors, Head of Careers and subject staff relating to choices made by students.
- The Timetabler will finalise the option blocks.
- If pupils wish to make any alterations to their choices after this, they must see Mr Duncombe, Assistant Head, who will see whether it will be possible to accommodate any changes at that stage.