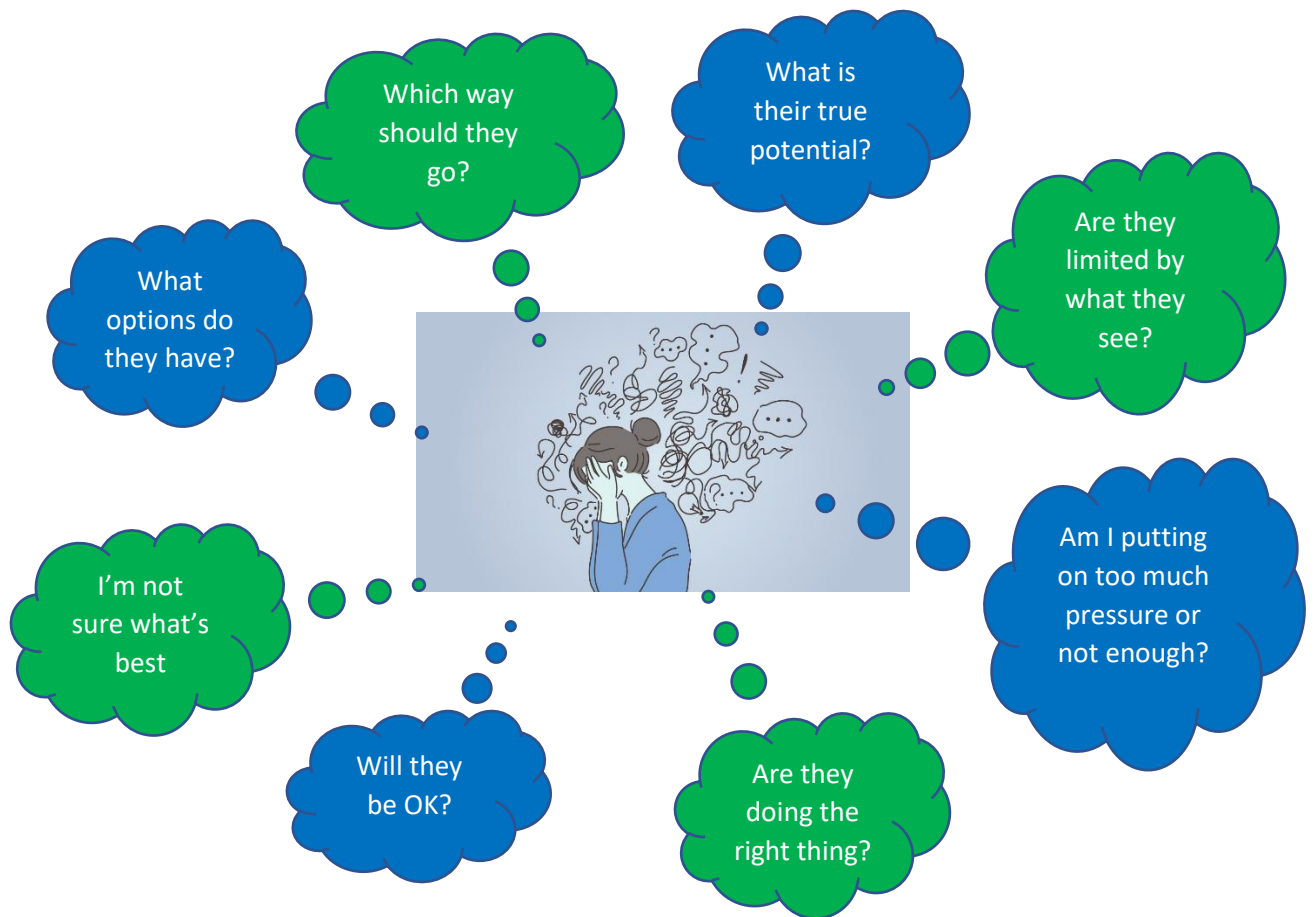




Guide for KS4 Parents/Guardians

Deciding what to do after Year 11 is the first BIG decision a student will make in their education career. For some, it is obvious, but for most it is a time fraught with indecision, panic, or worse – apathy.

We recognise that this is also a difficult time for parents. Many things have changed since you were 16 and thinking about *your* next step – for example, a change in the Law now means that students must continue in “[approved](#)” full-time education or training until they reach the age of 18. So, going to work full-time at 16 is not an option (and it will impact child benefit payments). We recommend you read this Parent Guide in conjunction with the Student Guide, which provides a more detailed breakdown on post-16 pathways.

A very recent and big upcoming change for September 2027 will be the introduction of V Levels...

HOT OFF THE PRESS - V Levels

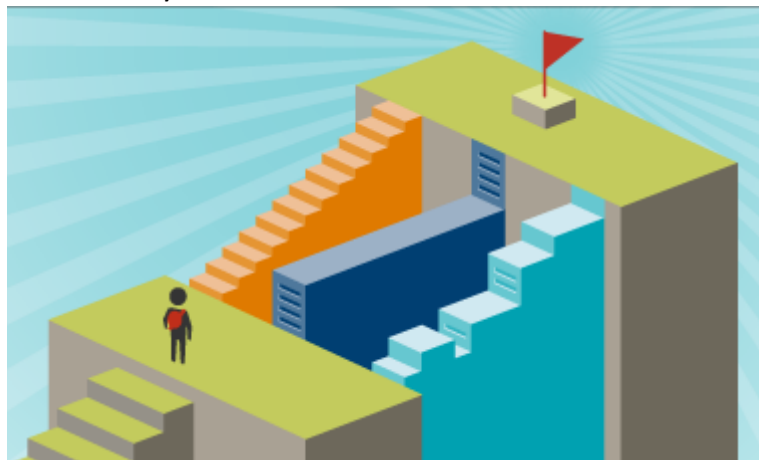
V Levels are vocational qualifications which will be available from September 2027 with the first round of courses covering digital systems, education & early years, and finance & accounting. Students can select 3 separate V Levels, each equivalent to 1 A Level, or choose to study a mix of V Levels and A Levels (for example, 2 V Levels and 1 A Level, or 1 V Level and 2 A Levels).

Eventually V Levels (and T Level) will replace BTECs; it is expected that BTECs will be completely phased out by 2030. Where there is a comparable T Level, Extended BTECs will be immediately phased out, with the remaining BTEC courses being phased out over the next 3 years. Future rollout of V Levels will include creative, design and travel subjects.

Other changes include:

- Tracking destinations. There was a time when you left school and no-one asked any questions. Now, when your child leaves school they will be tracked in a joint effort by school and the local authority to ensure they do not become NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).
- Job market changes – new and emerging jobs and jobs of the future... It is possible that your child will be doing a job in 10 years’ time that does not exist yet, such are the changes in some sectors such as Energy and IT, for example.
- Transferable skills – with an increased emphasis on transferable skills and training, it is unlikely your child will stay in the same job or sector until they retire. In fact, some studies estimate that your child will change their career pathway up to 15 times during their working life!
- Skills in general – employers are crying out for employability skills and often value these as much as qualifications. Students now are urged to seek work experience, career insights and part-time work opportunities wherever possible.
- Heard of T Levels? With increased pressure from employers for college leavers to have practical skills *and* work experience, the Government established the T-Level in 2020. With 20% of the course being work placement, students get to hone those employability skills whilst studying a course equivalent to 3 A-Levels. This enables students to attend university – if they want to – or apply for full time employment or higher apprenticeships. Increasing in the range of courses being offered year on year, the T Level is here to stay.

- Enjoying probably the biggest revival, in terms of training, is apprenticeships. But even these have changed – no longer just the preserve of construction trades and hairdressing, today's student can apply for apprenticeships in over 1500 occupations including law, finance, administration and healthcare to name but a few sectors.
- English and maths – to ensure every adult is literate and numerate, Government legislation dictates that all students must achieve a pass (Grade 4) in English and maths at the very least. Students who do not, will have to enrol on a Level 2 course post-16, and retake these exams as part of their study. We want to do all we can to help them pass first time, but we need your help and the co-operation of the student. Not having these qualifications post-18 will limit their career choices and impact their earning potential.
- Every subject being studied by your child in Year 10/11 leads to a **Level 2 qualification**. Ideally, after Year 11, students will move on to a Level 3 course which includes A Levels, Extended BTECS, T Levels and the soon-to-be introduced V Levels. These in turn can take your child to university, into the workplace or on to higher or degree level apprenticeships.
- When choosing a post-16 pathway, it is important that students understand their preferred mode of study; some students excel in exam-led academic subjects whilst others prefer a coursework-based practical approach. With a very few exceptions, both can lead to the same higher levels – the trick is choosing the mode they are most likely to excel in.



- Over 95% of university courses accept vocational qualifications as a route of entry.
- It's often the case that students consider the same career as a family member because this is all they know. But what about the student's interests, passions and personality? Careers education aims to expose students to the job market and broaden their horizons. Similarly, students will or will not consider higher education (university) because they are influenced by those around them. Careers education aims to inform students about the education and training pathways open to them, and encourage them to explore all avenues and become trailblazers!

- College reputations. All colleges, just like schools, are subjected to Ofsted inspections. The only reputation a student should be concerned about is the college's outcomes. The rest is generally misinformation and hearsay. It is also worth bearing in mind that a student's success in further education is largely down to themselves and their approach to the course. Students with a mature approach and good independent study skills will make college a great stepping stone to higher education, employment or higher apprenticeships. We recommend that all students visit at least 3 colleges and/or sixth forms before making their final decisions; details of open events will be posted in the Autumn term.

We have put together a Guide for KS4 Students which we would encourage you to read alongside this document. Both this document and the Student Guide are available on the Careers Education section of the school website. You can also refer your child for personal careers guidance by clicking [HERE](#).

Thank you.

Useful Websites for Parents/Guardians:

[*Interesting Article – Career Choices: Parental Pressure and Mental Health of Children*](#)

<https://www.parentkind.org.uk/for-parents>

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/parent-zone/>

<https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/careers-advice-for-parents/>

<https://www.talkingfutures.org.uk/>





If you have any queries, please email...

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