

Pathways Introduction Video 2025 – Transcript

Welcome to St Alban's Catholic High School's **Pathways** presentation for 2025. My name is Mr Berry and, alongside Mrs Goddard, our Deputy Headteacher, am one of the senior leaders with responsibility for curriculum at the school. Please can I recommend that you watch this presentation with your child. It is important that throughout the **Pathways** process, you and your child are talking about their possible choices as well as their concerns and questions. In this way, we can, together, ensure that students are best prepared to make the choices that are suitable for them as individuals.

Students in year 9 are sometimes unsure about the subjects that they would like to take at GCSE. Their **Pathway** towards GCSE can be uncertain and even worrying for them. Our **Pathways** process is designed to help students to see a clearer path to the future knowing that they may change direction if they need to and with guidance at all stages.

The current GCSE specifications are designed to stretch and challenge students. They contain increased content and most are assessed by final examinations only. Practical subjects are assessed by both coursework and a final examination. All students take will take GCSE examinations in religious education, English, mathematics and science. Our **Pathways** process will help students to fully understand the challenge of each of the other subjects available before they make a decision to study the subject at GCSE. To enable this to happen we have begun to consider our **Pathway** towards GCSE in the summer term of Year 9.

At St Alban's we believe that education should be challenging, fun, broad and balanced. For this reason we encourage students to choose a range of subjects to engage them as learners and to keep their options open for further study in the future.

The skills that students will learn in all of our subject areas will benefit them in later life. Students will, of course, always have their preferences and the **Pathways** process will help them decide which of these subject skills will be of most benefit to their future path.

We recognise that, for some students, nine or ten GCSEs is not appropriate. For this reason, there will also be an alternative courses available. This course will start **in the final 10 weeks of Year 9** and be flexible and adaptable to the needs of the group. If you believe that this alternative course may be an appropriate part of your child's **Pathway** at the school, please contact Mrs Pickard, our SENCO.

GCSEs are more than two years away. We believe, however, that students need time to consider which subjects they wish to study further before making a final decision. That is at the heart of our **Pathways** process.

At St Alban's we aim to ensure that students make informed choices. The final 10 weeks of Year 9 will help students to start to make these choices with information from subject teachers and leaders and a chance to learn more about what a GCSE in each subject will involve. Some students will be confident that they know the subjects they plan to study, while others will still be uncertain. We plan that over these 10 weeks students will have the opportunity to ask questions and, if necessary, adapt their **Pathway** to ensure that the final choices they make at the end of Year 9 will be the best for them now and in their future.

The curriculum has been designed to ensure that students have the opportunity to gain a depth of knowledge in all Key Stage 3 subjects through most of year 9. For the last 10 weeks the year 9 timetable will be re-designed to give students an opportunity to start to make choices

Subject choices will be in four Pathway blocks. Students be asked to choose one subject and one reserve from each block. Almost all subjects are available in more than one block to help make choices easier. In each block there will be at least seven Pathway groups, some subjects will have more than one group in a block if needed. There will be opportunities to make changes during the 10 weeks if a student wishes to try out more than one subject in a block.

If you need advice about the best subjects to choose, there are a number of helpful websites available, such as successatschool.org

It is important for students to keep their future options open. We believe that it is generally best that students keep their choices as broad and balanced as possible. This means that students learn a variety of skills and knowledge that will best prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences in later life.

It is also important to remember that students do better in subjects they enjoy and are good at. This must be considered when choices are made.

You should consider subjects that:

- That you may need in the future
- That you enjoy and want to study
- That you believe you can manage and do well in

Do not consider subjects:

- Just because your friends are doing them
- Just because you think they are an "easy option". There are no easy options.
- Just because you like your current teacher

Thank you for watching this presentation. Please can I encourage you and your child to come to the Pathways Evening on Wednesday the 26th February 2025. This will give you and them to opportunity to ask questions and get further information about each subject on offer at GCSE.

In the mean time, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either Mrs Goddard or myself at the school. Our telephone number and email addresses are on the screen.