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AKEB Newsletter



Welcome to the fifth edition of the AKEB's newsletter for parents with children in secondary school. Our aim is to share insights and provide access to useful resources to help you navigate your way around the education system and make informed decisions with your children at critical times during the academic calendar.

What's on in October?

Educational events and programmes for the family

The Royal Institution

Explore, investigate and be amazed
www.rigb.org/whats-on

The Royal Society

Explore, investigate and be amazed
www.royalsociety.org

Memrise

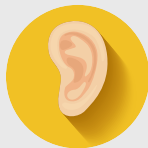
Languages made fun for budding linguists
check out
www.memrise.com

Your Child's Learning Style

Scientists and psychologists have developed a number of different models to understand the different ways that children learn best. One popular theory, the VARK model, identifies four primary types of learners: visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinaesthetic. Each learning type responds best to a different method of teaching. Auditory learners will remember information best after reciting it back to someone, while kinaesthetic learners will jump at the chance to participate in a hands-on activity.



Visual learners prefer to see information to visualize the relationship between ideas. Tactics to help visual learners: give them charts and graphics to show the relationship between various points and concepts.



Auditory learners prefer to hear information rather than reading it or seeing it displayed visually. Tactics to help auditory learners: reciting information out aloud is the best way to understand new ideas. If your child is an auditory learner then give her the opportunity to repeat points back to you. Encourage 'deep thinking' by asking challenging questions.



If your child is a reading/writing learner, they engage in learning by interacting with the text. This method is more powerful for them than hearing or seeing. Tactics for read/write learners: offer your child written 'quizzes' that allows her the opportunity to write down what she has learnt. Encourage her to make annotated cards and mind maps which she can display around her to memorize.



Kinaesthetic learners are hands-on experimental learners who learn best by 'doing'. Tactics for kinaesthetic learners: encourage your child's learning style by sprinkling a few hands-on activities during homework time. Ask her to stand up and demonstrate an idea. Role play is a great way to engage a kinaesthetic learner to enhance their learning style.

CHOOSING A PRIMARY SCHOOL

A Guide for Parents



Where can I find a School?

- Contact your local council for a list of schools in your chosen area.
- Read the school's most recent Ofsted reports and compare it with the previous report to see improvements and areas of concern
- Check out school league tables, which give exam results as well. This can be found on the government website to compare schools.
- Get advice from your Local Council. All councils have teams to help parents get their children into schools.

What do I need to look for in a School?

Ofsted Reports and League Tables are not all revealing. There is no better way to get to know a school than by setting foot through the door yourself. Even the closest of friends can disagree fundamentally about the same school, so don't just rely on word of mouth. Book a visit at the school. Here is a list of things you should be looking for:



Atmosphere and ethos: Does the school feel friendly? Are children valued and cared for? What is behaviour like at the school? What is the Head's beliefs and behaviour? What are the staff like?



Academic standards: How do children do academically at the school? Does the school have high expectations for all children? Do all children make good progress? What provisions are there for SEN children?



A rich curriculum: Does the school invest time and money in the wider curriculum? How does the school's Early Years curriculum work? What is music teaching like at the school? How much emphasis does the school give to sport and healthy living? Are drama and the arts taught throughout the school? Does it offer after-school activities?



School site: Does the school have plenty of outside space? Is it well-used? What are the classrooms like? How safe and clean is it? Does it have access to drinking water?



Location: Is the school near to home? What will the journey to school be like and how will you get there each morning?



Before and After-school provision: Will you need to use a breakfast club or after-school club? If so, what does the school offer and how much does it cost?



Friends: Is there one school where your child's friends are planning to go? Is this important or are you happy that they will make new friends in Reception?

For further information on individual schools, refer to www.schooldash.com

Vocational Qualifications

Vocational qualifications can range from general qualifications where you learn skills relevant to a variety of jobs, to specialist qualifications designed for a particular area of work.

They are available from several awarding bodies, such as City and Guilds, Edexcel and OCR and can be taken at many different sizes and levels.



BTECs and OCR Nationals

BTEC qualifications and OCR Nationals are particular types of work-related qualifications that are available in a wide range of subjects.

Many have been designed in collaboration with industry, so they can equip you with the skills and knowledge that employers are looking for.

The qualifications offer a mix of theory and practice and can also include an element of work experience. They can take the form of, or be part of, a technical certificate which are also one of the key components of an Apprenticeship.

BTECs and OCR Nationals are available in a wide range of subjects which include: Art & Design, Business, Health & Social Care, Information Technology, Media, Public Services, Science, Sport.

They are usually studied full-time at a Further Education (FE) college, or sometimes at school, or in collaboration between a school and college. You can also take them part-time at an FE college.

They are mainly taken by learners over 16, although some schools offer them to 14 to 16-year-olds, normally in combination with other qualifications such as GCSEs or Key Skills.

How are you assessed?

You will complete a range of assignments, case studies and practical activities, as well as a portfolio of evidence that shows the work you have completed. You are assessed by your teacher or trainer in your place of study. Depending on the qualification you choose, some assessment may also be done by external examiners.

BTEC and OCR Nationals are graded: Pass, Merit and Distinction.

UCAS points

If you take a qualification at level 3, you can earn points on the 'UCAS Tariff' for entry into higher education.

Both BTEC and OCR Nationals can earn you equal points to AS and A levels.

Where they can lead

BTECs or OCR Nationals can lead to a job or further study.

You could also use a level 3 qualification as a route into higher education, such as taking a Higher National Diploma (HND).

Higher National Diploma (HND)

An HND normally takes two years to complete full time, or three to four years when studied part time. On the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), HNDs are rated at level 5.

HND courses enable students to study a subject to see if they like it, before deciding whether to take it to degree level. They also provide a practical, group-based approach to learning, and are a more affordable alternative to studying a traditional degree at university.

You normally need two A levels, to start an HND course – although this varies by course and course provider.

Further Information

BTEC Higher Nationals (Pearson website): www.qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-higher-nationals.html

Qualifications (OCR website): www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/