



Ralph Thoresby School
“together for learning”

**Year 8 Options
Information
Evening**

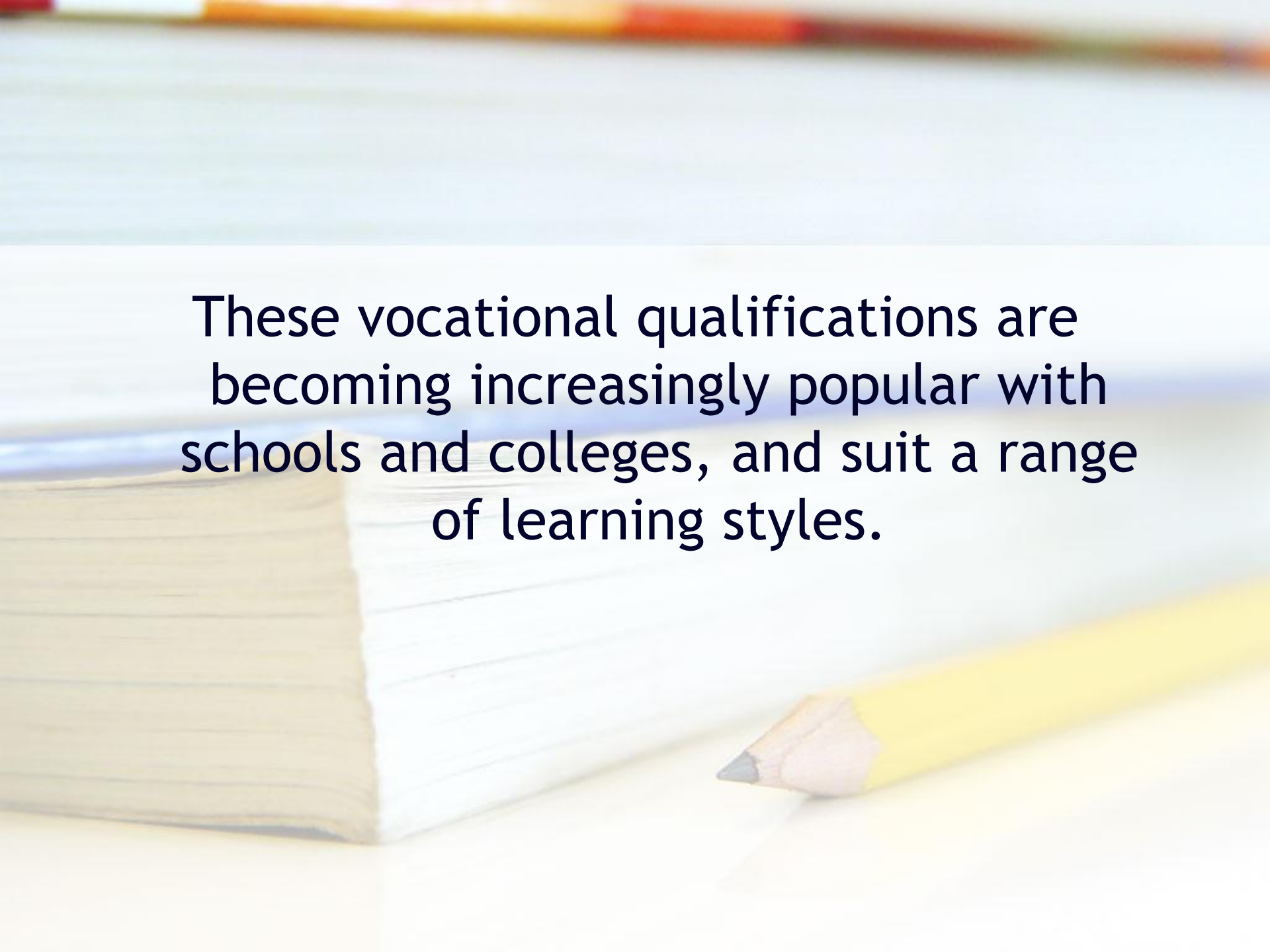
8th July 2010

General Qualifications

- GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) is an exam-based course, and covers a wide range of subjects. These are often one- or two-year academic study courses, with final exams at the end. They are also available as modular courses in some subjects.
- GCSE short courses count as half a GCSE and give your child more options.
- Controlled assessment replacing coursework.

Vocational and work-related qualifications

These include BTEC, OCR Nationals and Diplomas, where learners are assessed on the work they produce throughout the course. These qualifications offer a practical, hands-on approach to learning. They are alternatives to GCSEs for those who prefer a different approach to learning and assessment.

The background of the slide features a close-up, shallow depth-of-field photograph of a yellow pencil with a sharpened lead tip, resting on a white surface. To the left, the pages of a notebook are visible, showing horizontal lines. The overall lighting is soft and warm, creating a clean, educational aesthetic.

These vocational qualifications are becoming increasingly popular with schools and colleges, and suit a range of learning styles.

Nationals

- OCR Nationals are exam-free alternatives to GCSEs that have an engaging and practical approach to learning and assessment. The units are designed to help them develop skills used in the workplace.
- The majority of students will achieve their OCR National in ICT at the end of Year 9.

BTEC

BTEC is a work-related qualification, available in a wide range of subjects. The qualification offers a mix of theory and practical work, and can also include an element of work experience.



BTEC Introductory - This qualification is available at Level 1 and offers an entry into the industry sector and encourages the development of personal and work-related skills.

Level 1 BTEC is equivalent to 4 GCSE grades D-G

BTEC Firsts are available at level 2 and equivalent to 4 GCSE grades A*-C

Diplomas

- These are new qualifications, introduced to recognise achievements at ages 14-19.
- They have been developed with employers.
- Diplomas are equivalent to GCSEs with a more practical approach to developing the skills they'll need for careers or advanced studies.
- Higher Diploma 7 GCSEs at Level 2 (A* - C grades)

NVQs

National Vocational Qualifications are designed to recognise your child's knowledge and skills in relation to a specific job. They cover different occupational areas, each one reflecting the abilities your child will need to get started in a specific career.

Functional Skills

- These new qualifications are being introduced to address employers' concerns about young people not knowing the essentials in English, Maths and ICT.
- Functional skills qualifications offer your child the practical skills they'll need to get the most out of their education, future employment and everyday life.
- Opportunity for students to gain additional functional skills qualifications

Recommended Pathway

We will allocate the pathway that we think will lead your child to the greatest success at Key Stage 4 and progression at Post 16.

Red (level 2):

**Core + 3 GCSE
option subjects +
a language**

Orange (level 2):

**Core + a BTEC + 2
GCSE options or
the Higher
Diploma**

Yellow (level 1):

**Core + a BTEC
Level 1 + 1 or 2
GCSE options**

Green (level 1/2):

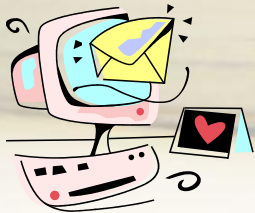
**Core + a College
course + Work
Placement**

Year 9 - A mixed year!

- End of KS3 Assessments in the Core Subjects (February) and begin GCSEs in all core subjects
- Complete a Mathematics GCSE module in June
- Begin GCSE (Full course) RE in January
- Complete OCR National in ICT by July
- FCSE - gain a new qualification in languages

Options Timeline for Y9

- Mentoring groups - Advice and guidance
- Review pathways January
- Options evening February
- Enrichment Day - Taster sessions
- Careers interviews
- Drop in sessions
- Options forms returned end of February



Check our website

www.ralphthoresby.com