

Welcome to GCSE Options 2025



Welcome from Mr Ford

Headteacher

Making the right choices



By the end, you should understand:

- ✓ St George's GCSE Curriculum structure
- ✓ The option choices available
- ✓ How to apply and what will happen next
- ✓ The support that can be accessed



St George's School



GCSE Options Booklet

January 2025

- St George's School website
 - School Life > Curriculum & Learning
 - Year 9 GCSE Options
 - Specific subject pages
 - GCSE Options Booklet



Subjects fall into two categories:

Core Subjects

Compulsory for all students

Option Subject

Students choose 4

Most students will complete 10 GCSEs:

- 6 Core
- 4 Choice Options



Core Subjects

English

- Usually 2 GCSEs: Language & Literature

Maths

- Tiered entry (higher or foundation)

Science

- Combined science (2 GCSE), tiered
- Students can opt for separate sciences

RE

- Full course GCSE started in Y9

Non-examined Subjects

Core Physical Education & PSHE



A typical timetable

At St George's, we have 24 lessons (+ Friday 5) per week

Year 10 and 11 run on a two-week timetable (48 lessons)

English	Maths	Re	PSHE	PE	Science Double	Opt A	Opt B	Opt C	Opt D
8	6	2	1	2	Science Triple	5	5	5	5



GCSE Options

Required GCSEs

- English Literature
- English Language
- Maths
- Religious Education
- Science*

*This will either be Combined Science (equates to 2 GCSEs) or Separate Sciences (equates to 3 GCSEs)

First Option Choice

Pick one subject from the below list

- Computer Science
- French
- Geography
- History
- Spanish
- Separate Sciences

2nd, 3rd and 4th Option Choice

Pick three options from the below and/or from First Option Choice

- Art & Design
- Business
- Computer Science
- Design & Technology
- Drama
- Economics
- Food Prep & Nutrition
- French
- Geography
- History
- Music
- PE
- Spanish
- Separate Sciences

Our GCSE Options booklet provides more detail on the combination of subjects students can choose



Things your child should do

Must

Pick at least one of: **Computer Science, French, Geography, History, Spanish, or Separate Sciences**

Should

In order to create breadth and balance we recommend choosing one (or more!) of: **Art and Design, Business or Economics, Design & Technology, Drama, Food Prep & Nutrition, Music, or Physical Education**

For the avoidance of doubt, your child can do:

- More than one practical subject
- Geography and History
- Two Languages
- Only one of Business or Economics

- Think about the demands of the course (e.g. NEA, non-examined assessment vs exams)



Your child will need to consider...

- Greater choice brings a greater responsibility to create their own **BALANCED** curriculum
- Begin to think about their future
- Different subjects offer:
 - ✓ different skills
 - ✓ different activities
 - ✓ different learning styles



Making good option choices

**Good
reasons to take an
option**

I am good
at this
subject

I enjoy this
subject very
much

My teachers have
told me that I am
good at this subject

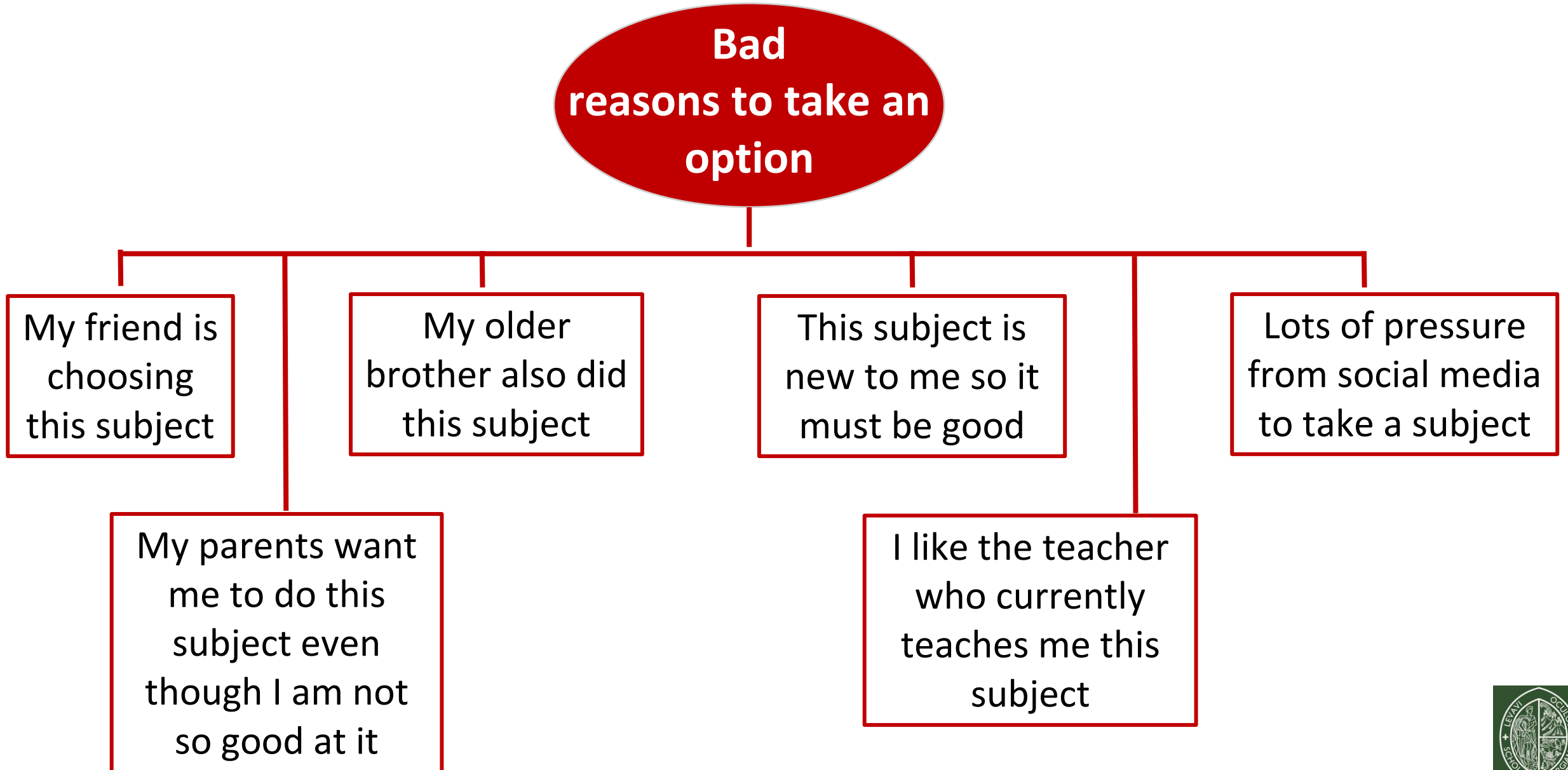
This subject may
help me when I
am older

I am good at
doing the things
involved in this
subject

I have researched
this subject and
know I would
enjoy it



Making bad option choices



Advice for Parents

- ✓ Use the parents' evening
 - Booking opened 8pm, Wednesday 8 January
- ✓ Guide, listen and ask questions
- ✓ Give freedom to choose
- ✓ Get your child to review their GCSE Options skills assessment
- ✓ Get advice...
 - from Subject Teachers, Tutor, House team



- It is perfectly normal to know exactly what they want to study
- It is perfectly normal to know some of what they want to study
- It is perfectly normal to have no idea what they want to study in the future and find it difficult to choose



The Options Form

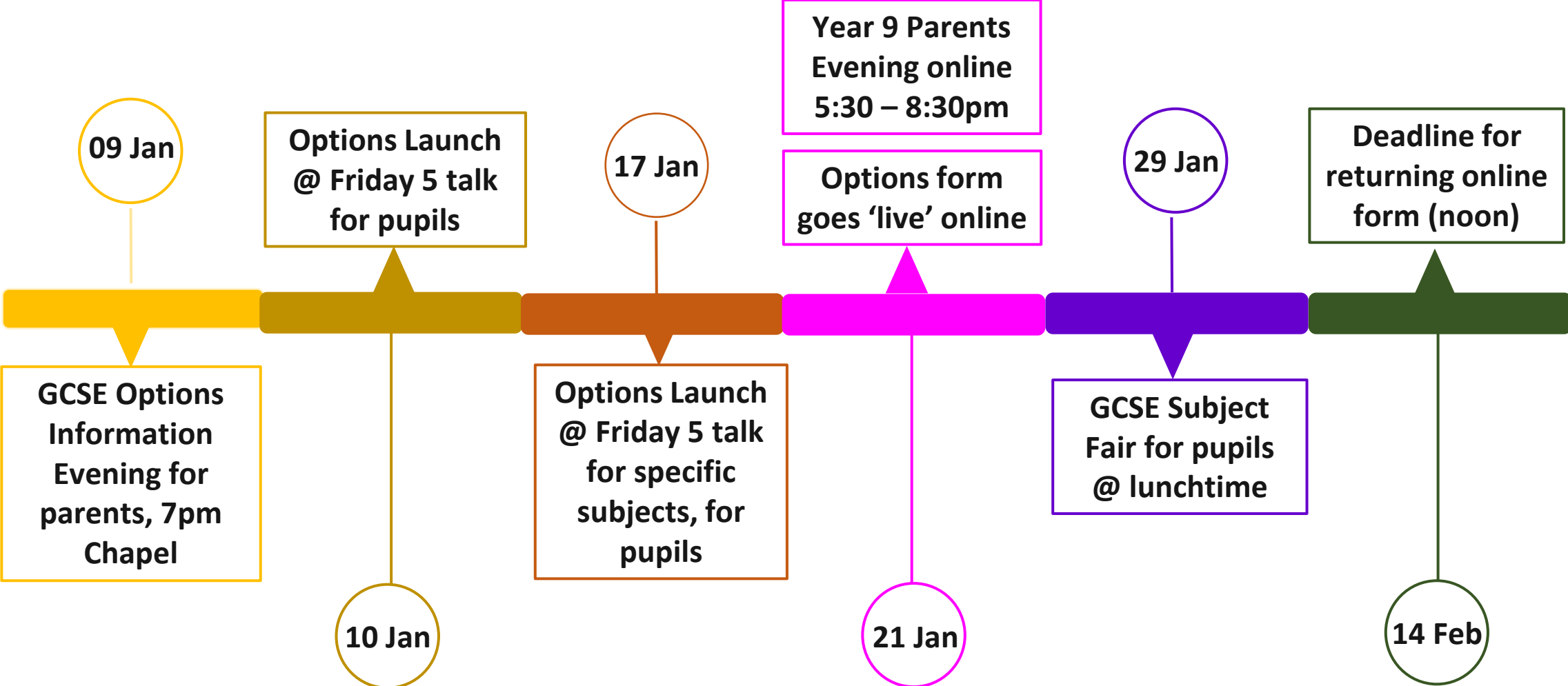
We are using Edval Choice portal for the Options process



- **21st Jan** your child will receive an email invite to log on and begin to input their choices
- **14th Feb noon** - Choices must be ranked and can be amended up until then. Your child will be asked to give two reserve subjects
- **Early May:** Confirmation of choices via email



Timeline for GCSE Options Process



Support

- Speak directly to subject teachers and tutors if the issue is subject related
- Encourage your child to visit the GCSE Options Fair at lunchtime on 29 January
- Read the Options booklet
- Heads of House may wish to discuss options for some individual students - Core Skills and Literacy support.
- If you are concerned or unclear over the process, you can contact the school: LeadershipAdmin@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk



Be encouraged...

- ✓ We want students to continue with a **broad** and **balanced** curriculum
- ✓ There is a good variety of **subjects** to choose from
- ✓ They have **plenty of time** to decide
- ✓ Trust the process; there are lots of people around with lots of experience, happy to give advice



Any questions?



Mrs Nicky Honeywell

Personal Advisor



www.servicesforyoungpeople.org



Services for Young People

- ▶ Hertfordshire County Council's Services for Young People
- ▶ Enabling young people to succeed
- ▶ Provide youth work projects, information, advice and guidance, work-related learning and wider support for young people in Hertfordshire
- ▶ Supporting 13 – 19-year-olds and up to age 25 for care leavers, young adults with learning disabilities and some other vulnerable groups

Services for Young People

- ▶ In schools - offer 1:1 impartial and confidential Careers Guidance appointments looking at post-16 choices and longer term educational and career choices.
- ▶ Also Access Point Projects – 1:1 appointments face-to-face, phone and video-call
- ▶ Nearest Access Point: Hemel Hempstead Young People's Centre, XC Centre, Jarman Park, HP2 4JS, open Monday to Fridays 11am – 5pm

In St George's

- ▶ **Nicky Honeywell**, CEIAG (Careers Education, Information Advice and Guidance) Adviser
- ▶ In school once a week, usually on a Monday, also works in STAGS and Sandringham
- ▶ Meets with students 1:1, also attends Parents Evening
- ▶ Based in the SfYP room in the Library
- ▶ To book an appointment, students can drop in at lunchtime or ask Mrs Marshall or Miss Hartley, their tutor or head of house to contact Nicky

In St George's



Mrs Lyn Mc Carney

Pastoral Support Manager

Student Well-being



Its all becoming a bit real.

The thing to remember is, there a long way to go!

Once we start talking about options and GCSE's, there can be a higher expectation and added pressure for students.

Pressure can come from teachers, parents or the students themselves.

Is your young person showing signs of stress or are they just being a teenager?



Student Well-being

For some its exciting to start focusing on the subjects they enjoy or are better at.

Other's just feel relieved to have been able to give up the subject they never quite got there head round.

For some this means time to study/revise and decide what they are going do when they are an adult. For others its daunting and they don't have a clue. Either is ok!

Sadly we see students burn out too soon and its often down to pressure and stress.



When is it more than just acting like a teenager?

KEVIN and PERRY?



Or Lauren 'Am I bovered tho!'



- What used to be 'good morning' is now just a grunt
- The answer to most questions is – *I dunno!*
- The general chat is about – 'going gym' and is there protein for dinner?
- Or maybe its all about fake tan and eyelashes

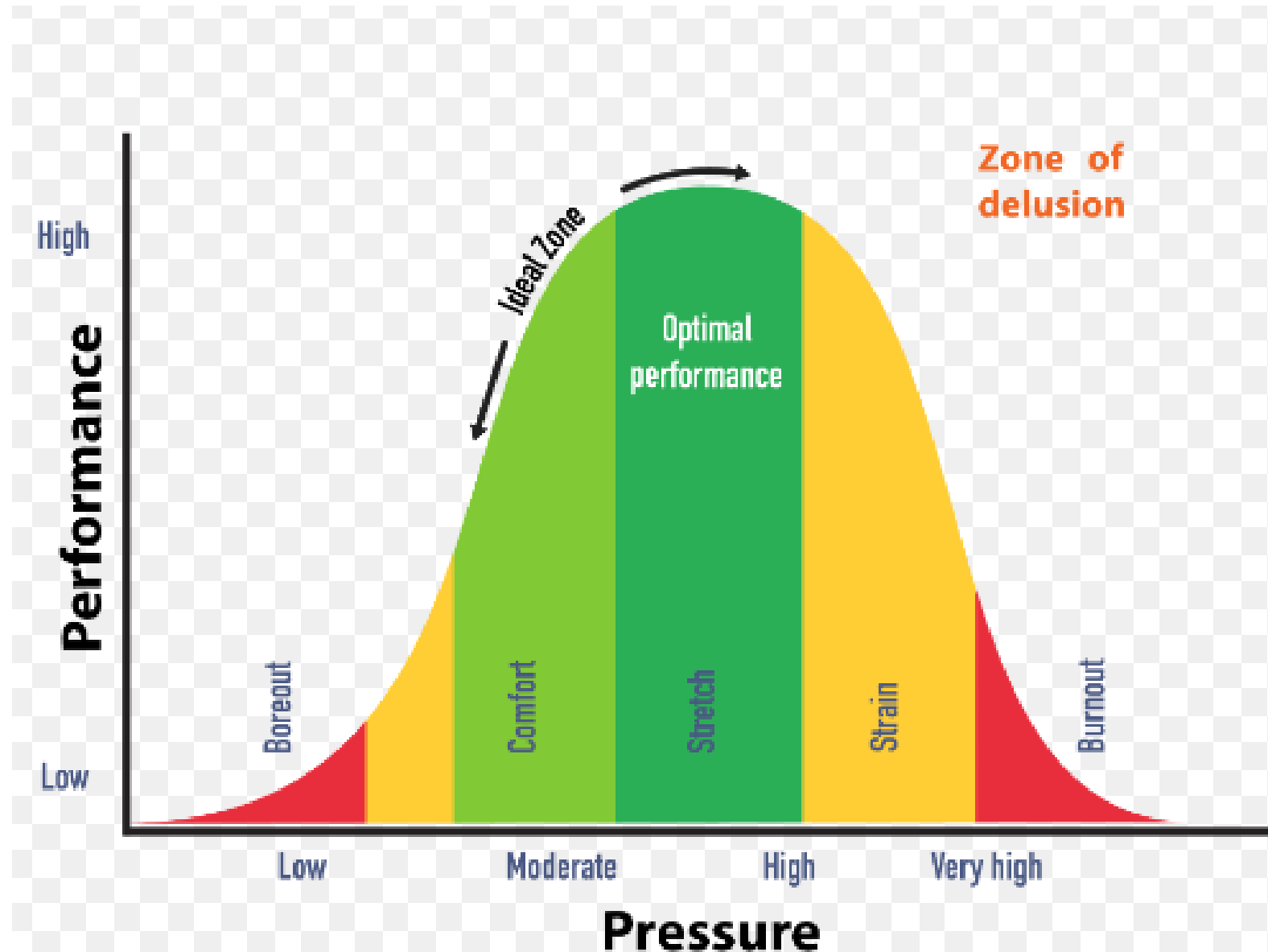
If you do get an answer to a question you are lucky, or if they look up from their phones to make eye contact with you.

Dare you say 'love you goodnight' followed by nothing, just keep saying it!

My own experience with my teenager son at bed time in year 9/10/11 was quite challenging, so I feel your pain.



Student Well-being



Some signs your young person may not be coping

- Regularly falling out with friends
- Becoming more isolated
- Lack of interest in activities outside of school
- Pressure to do school work perfectly
- Crying lots or showing no emotion
- Lacking in motivation
- Struggling with sleep
- Being secretive
- Regularly losing their temper



Friendships are a huge part of Year 9 and onwards. Students may need guidance on what is and isn't acceptable.

Help them be kind and tolerant of others.

Don't be afraid to limit their phone use, maybe all put your phones in one area when you go to bed!



Student Well-being – Lets talk!

Emotions like anxiety and stress are normal, many of us experience them in our daily lives and we all cope with them differently.

BE AWARE – notice and be curious.

Look out for changes in sleep, eating, level of isolation – if you notice these changes ask questions.

If they don't answer then try...



Student Well-being – What can you do?

- ✓ If your young person feels anxious, ask them what's going on and listen
- ✓ If they feel stressed, ask what about, let them know you care – don't feel you have to solve their problems, just listening might be all they need
- ✓ If these feeling start to effect there attendance, let us support you
- ✓ Try not to dismiss...
- ❖ 'There weren't any of these issues in my day'
- ❖ 'Do you know how lucky you are, look at this house we work so hard to provide for you'
- ❖ 'Man up'
- ❖ 'Stop attention seeking'
- ❖ 'Pull yourself together'



Student Well-being – What can you do?

Go for a hot chocolate. You don't have to have a deep and meaningful chat but putting aside some one on one time speaks volumes.

Walk the dog with them.

Have a chat in the car on the way to rugby, shops...

Get off your phone!



Student Well-being – What we can do

We are very lucky here at St Georges, our staff recognise the importance of student well-being and the importance that has on their academic outcome.

Our House systems allow us to forge strong relationships between staff and student.

- Tutors are the front line and work closely with their House
- Each house has a House Pastoral Assistant (HPA) employed to look after the well-being of the students in their house
- This may be a one off chat, a well-being check requested by a concerned teacher or parent
- Weekly one to one support, group work or the odd check-in
- Plus advice on who they can talk to outside of school/when they may need more specialist support



- ✓ Hang in there
- ✓ We are here to support you and your young people
- ✓ They generally all come good in the end!



Thank You!

