



KS4 at TCS

A Curriculum for OUR Learners

The KS4 pupils at The Cavendish School will be able to:

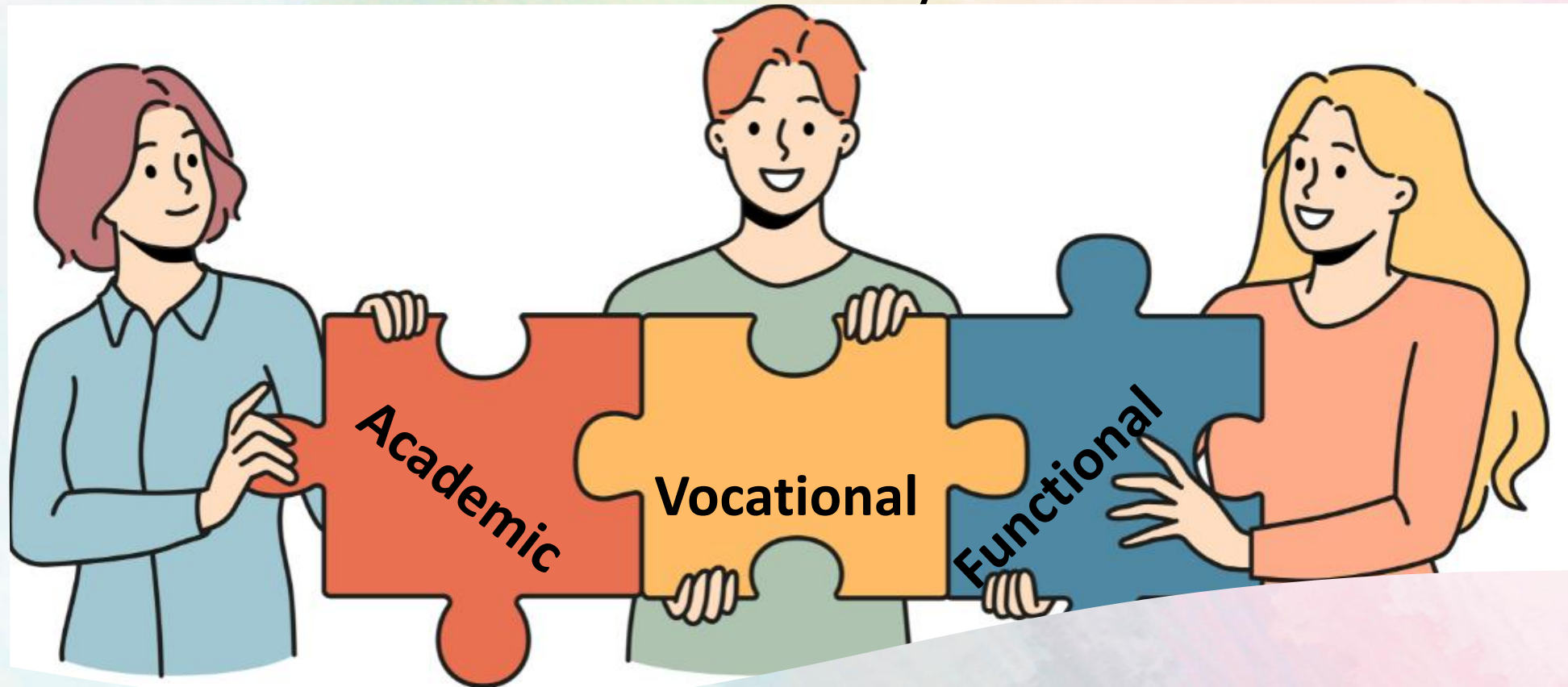
1. Achieve a minimum of 5 GCSE/qualifications and have accessed a balanced and ambitious curriculum
2. Achieve independence and the skills to access further education
3. Feel confident in the next steps of their journey and their options.



Flexibility and response to our cohorts



We don't have linear Pathways



We want children to be able to achieve their potential in every area and not be limited in any subject by segregating pathways



Planned Outcomes offer for Year 11

∞ **Block 1 – core subjects:** English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science Double award, Careers and Cooking at GCSE, *(or Level 2/1 and/or Entry Level as appropriate for pupil)*

6 Qualifications

∞ **Block 2 – Free Choice main:** 1 of GCSE/Level 2 BTEC, *(or Level 2/1 and/or Entry Level as appropriate for pupil)* e.g. Sports Studies, Psychology, Citizenship, Art.

1 Qualification

∞ **Block 3 – Free Choice mini:** 1 of GCSE, Level 2/1 and/or Entry Level as appropriate for pupil eg Art award, Statistics, E-sports

1 Qualification

∞ **Block 4 – *Optional extended day uptake:*** languages: Sign Language (Makaton or BSL), Modern Foreign languages (Spanish, French, German)

1 Qualification

∞ **Block 5 – *Optional Friday uptake Free Choice:*** 1 of GCSE, Level 2/1 and/or Entry Level as appropriate for pupil (eg D of E, ASDAN, Project Qualification)

1 Qualification

Minimum Qualifications: 6 Maximum Qualifications: 10 *(Not all at GCSE/level 2)*



Exams or NEA

∞ We are mindful of exam overload for our pupils so we are able to ensure that they are able to achieve good quality qualification results

Limit to number of exam based qualifications

Mind your head in year 8 & family support group

Starting exams in year 9

Number of qualifications

Exam access arrangements



Mental Health in the years leading to GCSEs

- ∞ Test anxiety was first recognised by psychologists in the 1950s
- ∞ Psychologists describe test anxiety as having 2 aspects – cognitive and emotional. The cognitive part refers to negative thoughts. Some negative thoughts are about the test, such as ‘I can’t do maths, and I will fail.’ Other thoughts, called test-irrelevant thoughts, are about what might happen before or after the test, such as ‘when I fail, everyone will laugh at me.’ The emotional part includes tension, and a sense of distress or unease, and physical symptoms, such as nausea and sweating.
- ∞ A recent large-scale study of 14-16 year olds in England found that 16.4% of pupils report to be highly “test anxious”
- ∞ Test anxiety can vary between students, depending on differences in their general levels of anxiety, how they perceive their ability and previous exam experiences. For some students, test anxiety is simply fear of the consequences of failure. However, many others are more anxious about how others will judge them. Some are unable to define their concerns, simply associating exams with a general sense of threat or dread.
- ∞ Studies have revealed that individuals on the autism spectrum show increased levels of anxiety (e.g., social anxiety [2]), corresponding to the fact that people on the autism spectrum have a higher susceptibility to anxiety at the neuronal level [3]. A well-known specific type of anxiety is test anxiety.
- ∞ Research has shown us that Test anxiety is significantly higher in the autistic students
- ∞ Cognitive interference: Worryingly, research (mirrored in leadership experience of Neurodiverse individuals in education) has also shown that there is increased impaired cognition in test situations for autistic pupils, meaning that our pupils are more likely to suffer lower qualification levels (up to 2 GCSE grades lower) than their potential due to Test stress and anxiety





Examinations in Year 9

Responding to the research means:

- ∞ All pupils in year 9 are offered the opportunity to start following examination curriculums and take scaffolding qualifications in English, Maths and Science.
- ∞ These scaffolding examinations are below the pupil's cognitive level and are designed to support them to overcome test anxiety in an environment where there is less pressure.
- ∞ Pupils are still taught at the appropriate levels, but are able to overcome the negative talk and anxiety associated with exams, gaining confidence and achieving their potentials in year 11 and beyond.



“Enabling the self”



Approaches to Learning

- ∞ A core element of the International Baccalaureate programmes is developing the attributes that make pupils successful learners. We believe passionately that pupils must be taught how to study independently, make connections between their subjects and to develop higher order thinking skills if they are to be successful learners.
- ∞ As part of their transition into GCSEs, year 9 students will have one hour per fortnight of metacognition in the summer term.

