

E M P L I Y ABILITY

Year 8 GCSE Options Workshop

On Wednesday 10th January Year 8 experienced a pilot 'GCSE Options Workshop' over four lessons. The purpose of the morning was to support the students with the decisions they will be making for their GCSE options and to encourage them to do some self-reflection. They thought about and discussed what subjects they enjoy, what they feel their strengths are and what motivates them. We then took the students a step further in helping them to link this information and subject choices to roles in the workplace.

For two of the four sessions, we invited speakers from different areas of work to talk about their journeys and the choices they made along the way. We heard from: a very inspiring, successful Business Consultant who set up her own business; a female Engineer who shared all the exciting roles within STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths); a Translations Company, talking about exciting roles with languages and our Careers Advisor from Adviza.



We were also very lucky to have three of our amazing students talk to the Year 8s; Llewelyn Woodman, our Head Boy, Lucy Howman, our Deputy Head Girl and Eve Williams from Year 10. They all spoke extremely well about making their GCSE choices and their thoughts for the future. They really are a credit to our school. The Year 8s did enjoy this part of the day.

The other two sessions were full of activities. The students had a booklet to work through for their self-reflection which involved a lot of interaction and discussion. They had to consider the subjects they were interested in, the skills they might need to take the subjects and then possible jobs that might be a route from that subject. They were also given A3 sheets with a picture in the middle such as a dog, safety goggles, and a shoe. The students had to use these items to mindmap all the different roles that might be linked to them. It was amazing the number of jobs the students were able to think of!

In computer rooms they used a Careers tool called 'Fast Tomato' which asks questions about the preferences of the students in various areas and then comes up with a list of possible jobs they could do. There is a lot of information about each of the roles, including qualifications and salaries; this generated lots of discussion.

We realise that Year 8 are still very young to be thinking about jobs in the future, but it was a valuable exercise in raising their awareness and aspirations. It was really great to hear so many discussions about how they might get to where they want to be. We do hope that the students had conversations with you about the morning. This was a pilot and we already have lots of ideas and thoughts for next year!



Feedback from the students:

What did I learn?

"I'd like to start a business and help it grow"

"You can be anything as long as you study hard"

About new jobs?

"A few of the jobs on 'Fast Tomato' were ones that I had never even thought about."

"That I like to socialise with people and would want to travel a lot."

What will you do next?

"Talk to people about what I want to do."

"I need to get better at Sports and Biology."

"Knuckle down and work hard."