مدرسة وستمينستر
THE WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

# Year 9 – Parent Orientation
# January 15th, 2025

# Principal's Address

**Carl Roberts**
Executive Principal/CEO

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# English National Curriculum

- Recognised and respected across the world
- Academically challenging but designed to also develop well rounded students
- Broad and balanced
- Two-year GCSE programme in Years 10 and 11 – General Certificate of Secondary Education at age 16
- Seven or Eight GCSEs including English, Math, Science, Humanities, Modern Foreign Language
- Specialise after IGCSE
- Advanced Levels at age 18 (no AS Levels) – Advanced Levels are designed to be challenging and are not suitable for all students
- Our students will go on to study all over the world and must be competitive in an international market
- We do not adapt our curriculum for one particular country, and we must stay true to the principles of the English National Curriculum

# Choosing IGCSEs

- Important decision that can be life changing – take it seriously
- Keep options open now and specialise later – students change a lot between age 13 and age 16
- Do not base your choice on the teacher
- Do not base your choice on your friends
- Choose subjects you enjoy as well as ones that will be useful for your chosen career
- Choose subjects you are good at
- Think about Sixth Form subjects – A Levels, BTECS or different curriculum

# BTEC – Alternative to IGCSE

- **BTEC**: Business Technology and Education Council.
- **Global Reach**: Pursued by over 1 million learners annually across 50 countries. Very common in UK and UAE
- **Alternative Education**: Offers a comprehensive pathway from fundamental learning to professional courses.
- **Industry-Driven**: Developed in collaboration with educators, employers, and governments to align with workforce needs.
- **Practical Learning**: Provides hands-on learning experiences throughout the career journey, whether students transition directly into employment or continue with further and higher education

# FAQs –
# What's the difference between a GCSE and a BTEC?

- BTECs are vocational qualifications, linked to employment, whereas IGCSEs are traditional academic courses.

- BTECs and IGCSE also differ in the way they're assessed. IGCSEs mainly involve two years of study with examinations at the end of the course. BTECs are continually assessed through coursework and practical projects. Students who do not do well in examinations will often be successful at BTEC.

- Registration with Pearson Board happens at the beginning of the course for two year whereas registration with examination board is done end of IGCSE.

# BTEC International Level 2

- BTECs at Levels 1 and 2 are equivalent to GCSEs
- BTEC International Level 2 offers **learners aged 14 and above the knowledge**, understanding and skills that they need to prepare for a career or continue in further education.

| BTEC Sizes | Equivalent International GCSE |
|---|---|
| Award (120 GLH) | Equivalent to **ONE** International GCSE |
| Certificate (240 GLH) | Equivalent to **TWO** International GCSE |
| Extended Certificate (360 GLH) | Equivalent to **THREE** International GCSE |
| Diploma (480 GLH) | Equivalent to **FOUR** International GCSE |

GLH – Guided Learning Hours. 120 GLH works out at 2 to 3 lessons a week over 2 years – the same as an IGCSE

**Level 2 BTECS do not currently count for UAE equivalency**

# BTEC International Level 3

- BTEC Level 3 equivalent is A-level.
- **BTEC International Level 3** offers **learners aged 16 and above** the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need to prepare for a career, continue in further education, or progress to higher education.

| BTEC sizes | Equivalent International A level sizes |
|---|---|
| Certificate (180 GLH*) | International Advanced Subsidiary |
| Subsidiary Diploma (360 GLH) | International A level |
| Foundation Diploma (540 GLH) | International A level + International Advanced Subsidiary |
| Diploma (720 GLH) | 2 International A levels |
| Extended Diploma (1080 GLH) | 3 International A levels |

**MOE Equivalency**

# FAQs –
# Can students with a BTEC still go to university?

- *BTECs are awarded the same UCAS points as A-levels.*
- Unlike A-levels, BTEC  aren't marked from A*-E.
- BTECs are graded on a scale from Starred Distinction (D*) to Pass (P). The full grading scale, starting with the highest possible grade, is here:
- Starred Distinction/Distinction Star (D*)- considered to be equivalent to an A*
    - •Distinction (D) -considered to be equivalent to an A -B
    - •Merit (M) - considered to be equivalent to a C
    - •Pass (P) - considered to be equivalent to an E

**•BTEC International is now recognized by MOE**

**•Over 260 universities recognise the BTEC including those within the US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand**.

# BTEC

- Level 2 subject (start studying in Year 10): BTEC Business Studies
- Level 3 subjects (start studying in Year 12): BTEC Business Studies and BTEC IT.
- Limited spaces on BTEC courses – L3 BTECs are popular and we expect L2 to be the same
- Seats on BTEC courses will be allocated only after teacher approval
- Students may not do a BTEC and an IGCSE in the same subject
- As with all options, courses will only run if enough students apply

# Introducing the subjects

**Ms. Grace Aluoka**
Assistant Principal – Secondary School & Sixth Form

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# Year 9 - Compulsory Subjects

- First Language English - IGCSE
- Mathematics - IGCSE
- Islamic Education (A & B – MoE) / Life Skills (Non-IGCSE)
- Arabic (A/B - MOE) (Non-IGCSE – for all students)
- Social Studies - MoE
- Physical Education - Non-IGCSE

# Technology option
# (Chosen in Year 9 and IGCSE Exam will be done in Year 11)

Choose one of the Technology subjects from below:

- Computer Science
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

# Second language/other alternative subjects
# (Chosen in Year 9 and IGCSE Exam will be done in Year 10)

1. Urdu
2. French
3. Art & Design
4. English Literature
5. Geography
6. Enterprise
7. Environmental management
8. Global Perspectives

***All subjects in red font are not in the list of approved subjects for MoE Equivalency - The British System.**

# Year 10 – Subject Options (2025-2027)

| Optional Subjects<br>(Select ONE subject from each of the blocks below) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Option 1** | **Option 2**<br>**(Double award students need not choose this option)** | **Option 3** |
| Physics | Biology | Business Studies |
| Business Studies | Economics | Chemistry |
| BTEC Business Level 2 | | BTEC Business Level 2 |
| Combined Science – Double award | | Accounting |
| | | IGCSE Physical Education (Only students who take Biology/Combined Science) |
| | | Psychology<br>(Only students who take Biology/Combined Science) |

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*Subjects in red font are not in the list of approved subjects for MoE Equivalency - The British System.

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# Important Points to Remember

- All students are required to select **three subjects (with one science subject being compulsory)** at the end of Year 9, which they will study in Years 10 and 11.
- Students who have selected **IGCSE Business Studies cannot opt for BTEC Business Level 2.**
- Students will continue with their Second language/other alternative subjects chosen in Year 9 and will sit for IGCSE Board examination at the end of Year 10.
- Students will continue with their Technology option chosen in Year 9 but will sit for IGCSE Board examination at the end of Year 11.
- It is mandatory for all students to appear for the IGCSE Board examinations in all the chosen subjects.
- Social studies, Ministry Arabic and Islamic Education are subjects offered by the Ministry of Education (MoE)
- ***If any group has less than 20 students that option will not be considered.***
- ***Please note: Subject changes after submission will only be accommodated if space is available in the classes allotted for the requested subject.***
- **Submission of online registration form by 30th January 2025.**

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# For reference: By the end of Year 11

**Subjects' students choose at the end of Year 8**

**Subjects' students choose at the end of Year 9**

## Mandatory subjects

| |
|---|
| Islamic Education (MoE) /Life skills |
| Arabic A/B (MoE) |
| Moral education<br>Social Studies<br>Physical Education |
| English |
| Mathematics |

**- Students will continue with their Second language/other alternative subjects** chosen in Year 9 and will sit for IGCSE Board examination at the end of Year 10.

**- Students will continue with their Technology option** chosen in Year 9 but will sit for IGCSE Board examination at the end of Year 11.

| Optional Subjects (Select ONE subject from each of the blocks below) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Option 1** | **Option 2** | **Option 3** |
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| Business Studies | Economics | Chemistry |
| BTEC Business Level 2 | | BTEC Business Level 2 |
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# Year 8 Parent Orientation

- **Equivalency**
- **Subject list, Exam board, syllabus code**
- **GEMS parent portal**

**Ms. Ebini Chacko**

Head of Teaching, Learning & Assessment – Secondary Boys

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# Equivalency

Secondary school certificates from Private Schools applying **the British System** shall be equivalenced to the general secondary **certificate,** without specifying the courses, in accordance with the following general conditions:

The student shall **pass five (5) subjects** in the general level courses **(GCSE level or IGCSE)** in one of the success grades (A*, A, B, C, D,E), including the following subjects:

- ✓ **Mathematics.**
- ✓ **One of the science subjects (Physics, Chemistry or Biology) or a Double Science subject.**
- ✓ **English language or English Literature.**

In the relevant regulatory decisions, Islamic education and the Arabic language are not counted among the subjects.

# Syllabus code and examination boards

| No | Subject Name | Syllabus code | Examination Board (Cambridge/Pearson/Oxford AQA) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Accounting | 4AC1 | Pearson/Edexcel |
| 2 | Art and Design | 400 | Cambridge |
| 3 | Biology | 0610 | Cambridge |
| 4 | Business Studies | 450 | Cambridge |
| 5 | Chemistry | 620 | Cambridge |
| 6 | Combined Science | 9204 | Oxford AQA |
| 7 | Computer Science | 0478 | Cambridge |
| 8 | Economics | 4EC1 | Pearson/Edexcel |
| 9 | English as a Second Language | 510 | Cambridge |
| 10 | English Literature | 9275 | Oxford AQA |
| 11 | Enterprise | 454 | Cambridge |
| 12 | Environmental Management | 680 | Cambridge |
| 13 | First Language English | 500 | Cambridge |
| 14 | French | 1FR0 | Pearson/Edexcel |
| 15 | Geography | 0460 | Cambridge |
| 16 | Global Perspective | 457 | Cambridge |
| 17 | ICT | 0417 | Cambridge |
| 18 | Mathematics | 580 | Cambridge |
| 19 | IGCSE Physical Education | 413 | Cambridge |
| 20 | Physics | 625 | Cambridge |
| 21 | Psychology | 1PS0 | Pearson/Edexcel |
| 22 | Urdu | 1UR0 | Pearson/Edexcel |

# Important Web links

- **CAIE** : https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/
- **PEARSON EDEXCEL** : https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html
- **OXFORD AQA** : https://oxfordaqaexams.org.uk/
- **GEMS PORTAL -** http://www.gems.ae/

# Option Selection on GEMS Portal

GEMS EDUCATION
We see genius in every child

Looking to enrol your child at a GEMS School? Find a School

GEMS EDUCATION

Learn more about us

LearnOS

An all-in-one integrated platform empowering teachers to teach better, helps students to learn better and enables parents to engage better.

GEMS connect

Access and edit student information, pay fees, view attendance and assessment report, submit leave requests and do much more in one place.

GEMS Classroom

For Teachers, Students and Parents, Our end-to-end Learning Management System (LMS) connecting students, teachers and parents.

GEMS REWARDS

An exclusive rewards programme for our community of students, parents and staff designed to make quality education accessible.

alumni

A lifelong relationship with our students, starting with strong engagement through the student experience to university & professional career.

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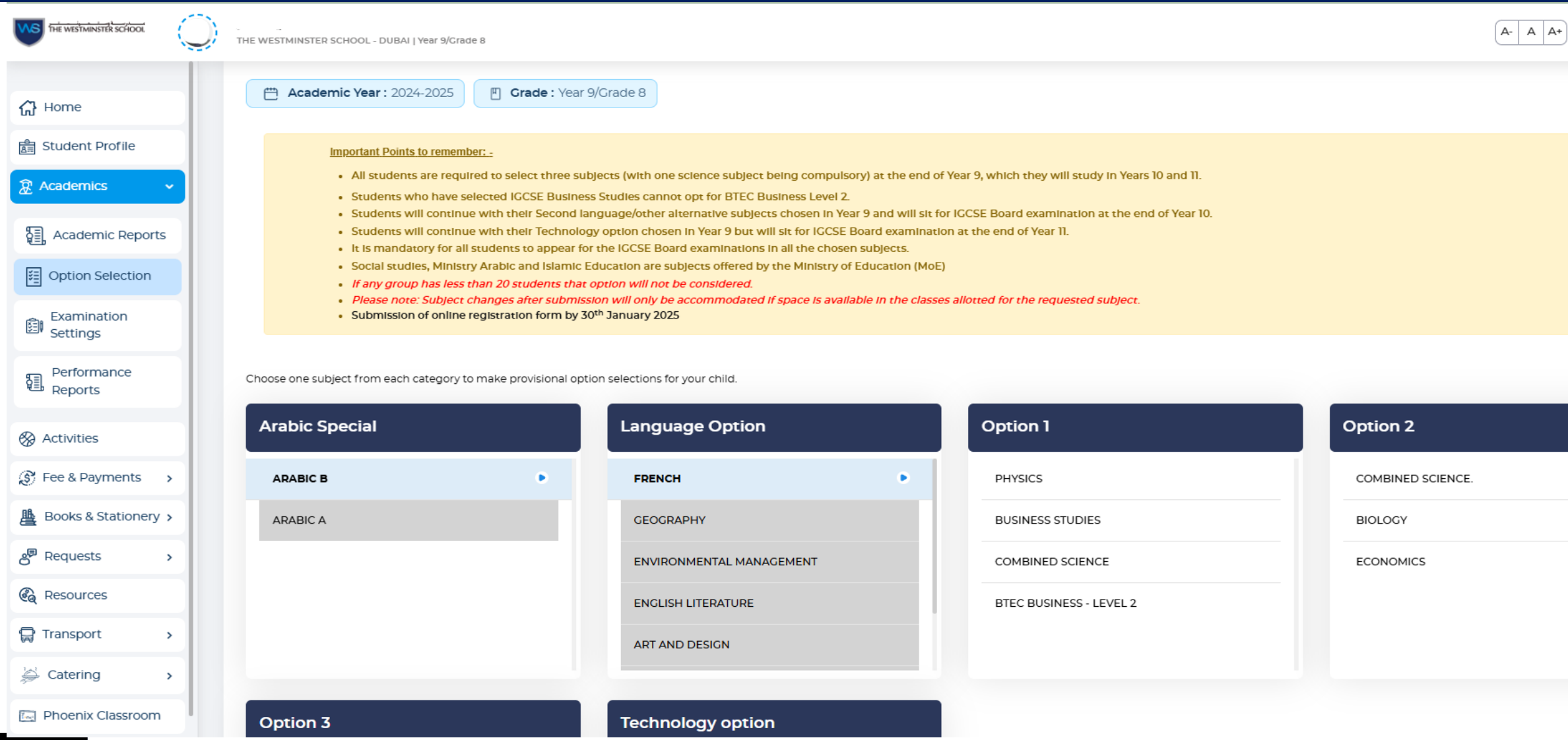
# Option Selection on GEMS Portal

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# Address by TWS Career Counselor

## Ms. Lali Saji

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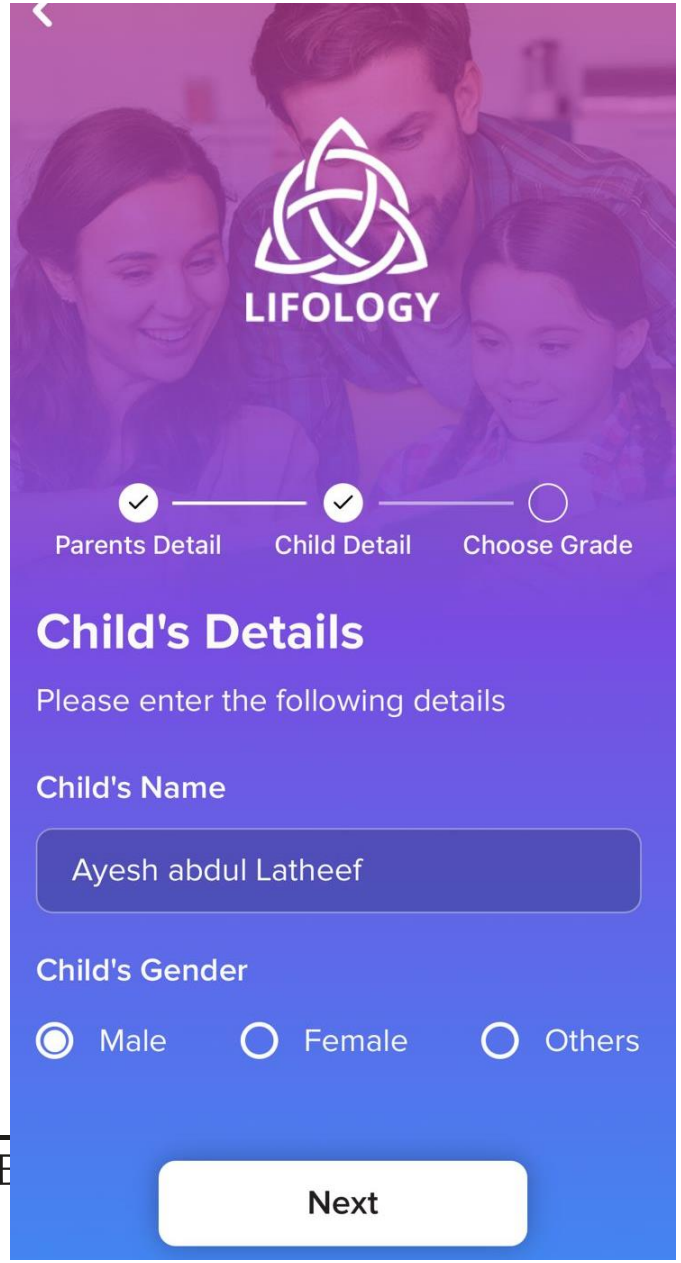
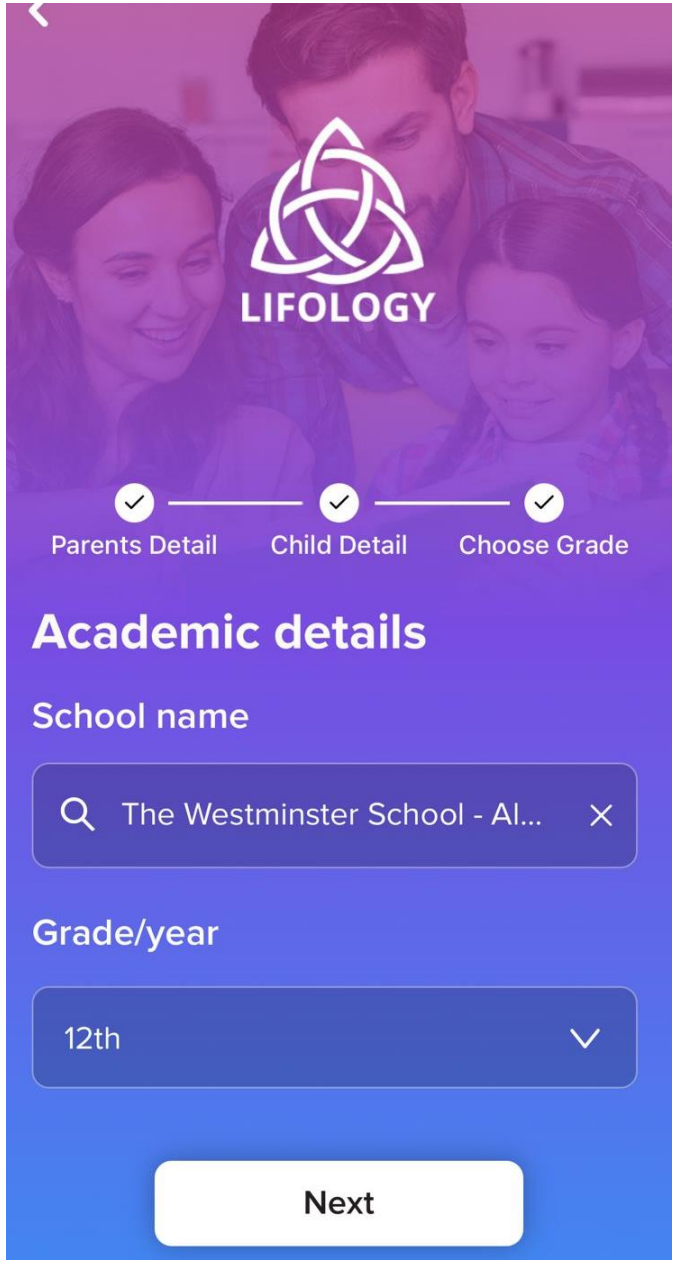
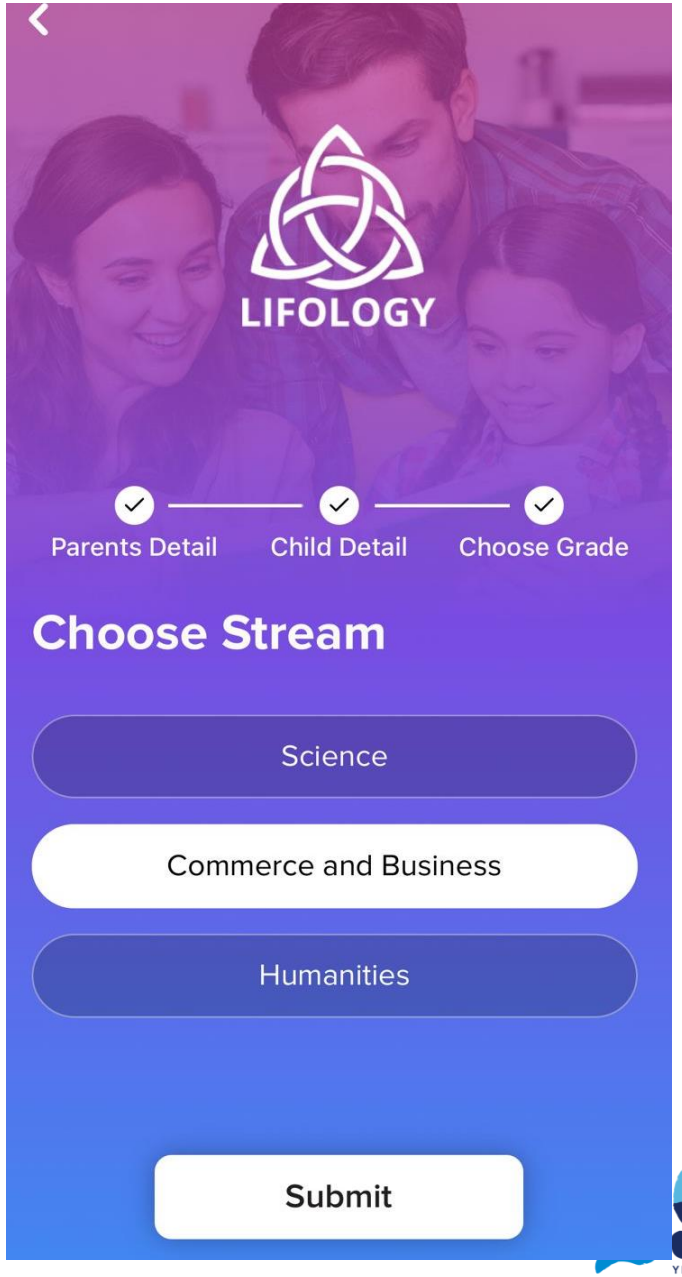
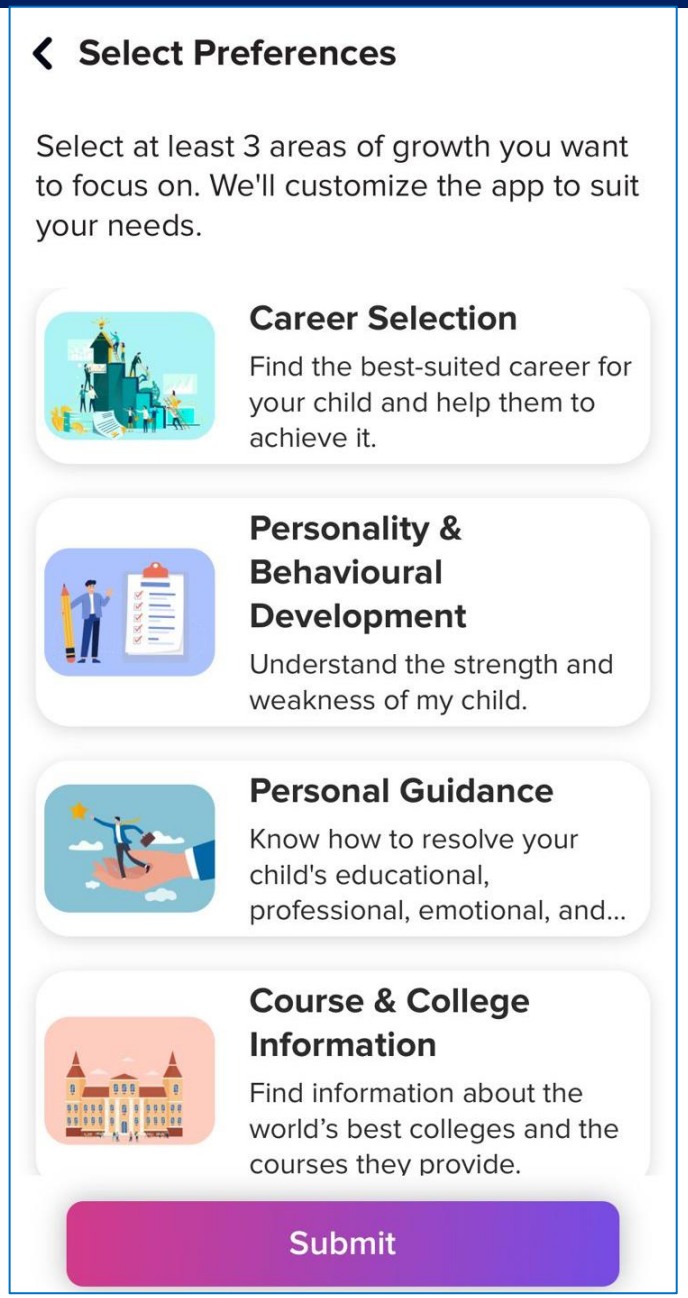
# GEMS Lifology

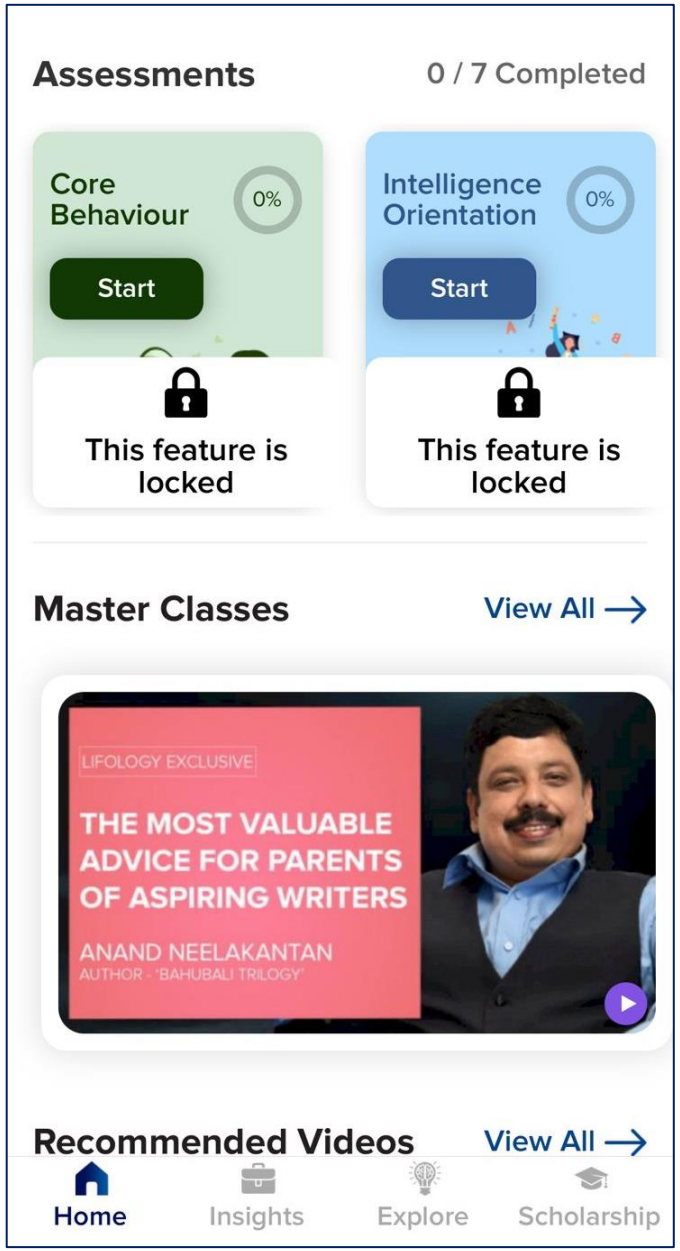


# GEMS Lifology

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