



11th January 2017

Dear Parents,

Year 9 Subject Consultation Evening - Thursday 19th January – 4pm – 7pm

Year 9 Options Evening - Thursday 2nd February – 6pm – 8pm

As we outlined in our communication with you at the start of the academic year, January is a vitally important month for our Year 9 students. The Spring Term of Year 9 is an exciting time as there is a special emphasis on finding out not only how they are getting on with regards to their Key Stage 3 targets, but also looking ahead to Key Stage 4 and the buzz of making choices about the courses and pathways that students will follow in Years 10 and 11. The whole process is planned to enable students to think carefully about themselves, their strengths, their ambitions, and to be fully aware of all possibilities open to them. This happens in a number of stages.

Stage One - Year 9 Parents' Subject Consultation Evening on Thursday 19th January 2017.

The Parents' Evening will run from 4.00pm – 7.00pm and will give you the opportunity to speak to subject teachers about your son/daughter's progress in the subject to date and what they need to do to achieve their targets at the end of Key Stage 3. **Whilst it will give an opportunity to talk about your son/daughter's individual potential in the subject for GCSE it is not designed to discuss Key Stage 4 options.**

Your son/daughter has received an appointment sheet that they will use to record the times organised for you to meet their teachers. Please encourage them to include meetings with all of their teachers.

Appointments are usually five minutes in duration as there are lots of parents to see. Please don't be offended if your discussion is cut short, this will only happen if an obvious queue is forming. If you think that a longer appointment will be needed, please contact the school to arrange a separate appointment. On the evening the governors of the school will be offering the opportunity to meet with them, if you feel that this is of interest to you please make an appointment in advance with the school office.

Teaching staff will be situated either in the main hall or in the Mersey dining room. Notice of where to find the various members of staff will be displayed in the school entrance hall.

Prior to the evening we will also be asking you to fill in a short online questionnaire so that we can gather your views on various aspects of your son/ daughter's education.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of this report further or are unable to attend parents evening then please do not hesitate to contact me or your child's Head of House.

Stage 2 - Year 9 Options Evening Thursday 2nd February 2017

At the Parents' Evening you will have found out about your son/daughter's potential in each of their subjects directly from their subject teacher. This is then followed up with the Options Evening on Thursday 2nd February. This is designed to give you a full overview of what the curriculum looks like at Key Stage 4 and what options are available to your son/daughter given the constraints we now work within in schools. We will also outline in detail the many changes to the structure of the GCSE examinations and how they are graded.

On the evening there will be a presentation in the main hall at 6pm where Key Stage 4 will be outlined, along with the context and the timeline and processes we follow.

From 6.30pm – 8pm subject staff and current GCSE students will be available to discuss the content and structure of the Key Stage 4 courses in our 'Options Marketplace' in key areas around the school. A map of locations will be distributed at the end of the talk.

On Thursday 26th January Year 9 students will have spent the day considered all this information in depth and they will bring home their Options Booklet. Please could you take the time to read through this information before the options evening.

Stage 3 – Counselling and Final Decisions

Following the Options Evening students will then be given an options form that they must return to school by Thursday 9th February to express their **initial** preferences. This will enable us to clarify which subjects are definitely running and make final decisions about option blocks. On Wednesday 22nd February students will be given the opportunity to talk to their tutors about their options during their Review Day appointment. Further details of this will come out very soon.

Where there are any issues remaining, or for students who are still unsure, this will be followed up with a one-to-one discussion with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

When all this is done you will receive a letter to confirm your son/daughter's final choices.

At any stage you are more than welcome to contact us if you have any further questions or queries not covered in any of the stages outlined above.

In the meantime we look forward to seeing you at the Year 9 Parents and the Options Evening.

Yours sincerely,



Mr T. Houghton,

Assistant Headteacher – Curriculum and Assessment