

15 April 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Year 9 Options Process 2024

This term your child will be selecting their option courses for Year 10 and Year 11, known as Key Stage 4. This is an important and exciting time, as they get to choose from a wide range of courses and subjects. They will be asked to choose 4 courses from a possible 16, to study alongside their core curriculum of English (Literature and Language), Maths, Science, Ethics & Philosophy and Core PE. I am writing to you to share some details of the process, provide some key dates for your diary and hopefully answer some of the question that you may have.

On 16 April 2024, Year 9 students will experience a full day of taster sessions run by the teachers of some of the options subjects. This will give them a flavour for some of the courses that will be new to them, such as Media Studies, Business & Enterprise, BTEC Sport, to name a few.

Following the taster day, students will complete a 'straw poll', informing me of which courses they are interested in. This is simply to give me an idea of which courses are viable to offer. For the straw poll, students will have free choice from all 16 possible courses. The straw poll helps me to decide which combinations of courses can run. With a possible 16 courses to choose from, there are nearly 2000 possible combinations of 4 subjects. Therefore, we need to arrange the courses into 4 blocks, and as a result, some combinations of subjects will not be possible. When deciding the blocks, the straw poll analysis is used to determine the most popular combinations. Students will choose a first choice and a reserve choice from each block.

You are warmly invited to our Year 9 Options Evening which will be held on 23 April 2024, between 6.00pm – 7.30pm, where we will explain the process in more detail and you will have the opportunity to talk to subject specialist teachers for all of our subjects to help make an informed decision.

Once the blocks are finalised, the Options Website will be launched. This will give you more information about the process and the courses on offer. It will also show you the blocks and allow you to start thinking about the combination of courses on offer. The options form will be emailed directly to students and they will have around two weeks to complete it.

Whilst every effort is made to give the students their first choices, inevitably some students may be allocated a second choice. If courses are oversubscribed, or a course does not have enough uptake to run, then second choices will be used. With this in mind it is important to think carefully about the second choices and ensure that a different course is selected. Once finalised, a letter will be sent out informing you of the allocations.

Yours sincerely,



Nick Campbell
Assistant Headteacher