

Ref: 126/2020



6<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

### Choices for Year 8 into Year 9

Your son is now approaching an important point of the compulsory part of his secondary education, and the time has therefore come to begin to choose the subjects that he would like to study in Year 9. This year we are continuing to operate an Options process for students entering Year 9 in order to broaden the range of subjects they can study in addition to giving him adequate time to prepare for their GCSE studies in Year 10.

The transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 is an important one, and we are committed to helping your son make that transition smoothly and successfully. In order to do this, your son will need to make the right choices for his studies in Year 9. To support that decision-making process, we have strengthened the Careers advice that is available to pupils.

As part of the process, and as mentioned in the most recent edition of *SMArtTalk*, we would like to invite you to a meeting at **6pm on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January** in the Drama Hall here at school. At the meeting we will explain more about the Options process works, and distribute the necessary paperwork. The options form needs to be returned to us by **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March**.

You will receive two documents to support you and your son as you consider the options available to you. This letter sets out the choices that need to be made, and provides a form for you to communicate back to us what your choices are; in addition, a booklet sets out details for each course on offer.

If you have any questions about the GCSE Choices process, please don't hesitate to contact us:

- subject-specific questions, such as your son's suitability for a course, or detailed questions about course requirements *etc*, are best referred to your son's subject teacher or to the relevant Head of Department. May I take this opportunity to remind you that there is a Year 8 Parents' Consultation Evening from **3:45pm on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February**.
- questions about our Careers Education and Guidance programme are best addressed to the colleague who leads this area of our work, Mrs C Roberts;
- if you would like any advice about what adaptations we can make to the process if your son has special educational needs (or is disabled), please contact our SEND Co-ordinator, Mrs N Kavanagh;
- questions about the Option Choices process should be referred to one of our Vice-Principals, Mr S Slater, who oversees it; and
- any pastoral matters may, as always, be referred to your son's Head of Year, Mrs N Harrison.

With my best wishes as you approach this important stage in your son's education,

Yours faithfully,

Stephen Brierley  
Principal