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Dear Parent,

Re: Year 9 GCSE Option Process

January sees the start of the Year 9 GCSE option choices process and I am writing to inform you of some key dates relating to this:

- Wednesday, 8th January 8.55 – 9.25 AM All Year 9 students have an extended Options Assembly
- Tuesday, 14th January 6.00 – 7.00 PM Year 9 Options Information Evening **for parents only**

At the Options Assembly students will receive an Option Booklet that describes the different GCSE subjects available. This will be a useful guide in your discussions at home about which GCSE subjects your daughter/son should take.

At the Year 9 Option Information Evening we will go through the process with parents and provide further information regarding the GCSE options and how to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum for your daughter/son. This is therefore a very important evening.

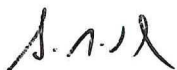
In the weeks following the Option Information Evening each student will have an individual guidance meeting with a senior member of staff. At this meeting the student's Personal Profile will be discussed and the GCSE options they are considering. This discussion will result in the Option Form being filled in and sent home with your daughter/son. This gives parents and students a chance to have a further discussion about the options before the choices are finalised.

The guiding principle of our process is finding the most appropriate route through Key Stage 4 for each child to give them the best chance of success at 16. Our guidance meeting will focus on the student's interests, current level of achievement, long-term ideas about careers and the way they like to learn.

We welcome conversations with parents during the process and will do our best to answer queries quickly. However, with a large year group, we ask for your patience if some research is required before we can respond. At each stage in the process you will be kept informed. Do not hesitate to contact Sarah Fitzpatrick, Head of Year, with any queries.

We look forward to seeing you in January.

Yours faithfully,



Steve Wilson
Headteacher

OPTIONS INFORMATION EVENING

This information sheet will hopefully help you understand the information you will receive at the Option Evening, on Tuesday, 14th January 2020

- Your child will receive an Option Information Booklet that includes information about all the courses available to study at GCSE level and an Option Block Sheet during the Options Assembly.
- All students study English, Maths and Science (Core Subjects). The exact Science course students will follow within the core will be decided later in the year, informed by students' achievements at KS2 and the information we have about their progress in Year 9 and potential achievement. Teachers' recommendations and students' expressed preferences will be considered as part of this process.
- In addition to the core subjects, students can select a number of other option subjects. In the Option Information Booklet each Head of Department has included details of the syllabus and assessment and some comments from students about the types of learning in their subject.
- Students select one subject from each option block (vertical column) – see attached option block sheet. Students therefore select 4 option subjects.
- Almost all students take at least one of the subjects highlighted in green
- Students who opt for the Applied Studies Course will have the opportunity to sample, alongside their academic studies, many different types of career, for example plumbing, electrical work, construction, hair and beauty, in order to develop skills to help them access higher level courses at a later date. This course takes up 2 of their 4 option choices.
- The choice of courses is decided after a guidance meeting and further discussions if needed. However, we reserve the right to make an informed professional decision about which package of core and option courses is most appropriate and most likely to lead to success.
- The aim of this process is to help students go on to study courses they will enjoy, be successful in and which will allow them to progress on to their chosen Post 16 and Post 18 career or degree intention. The approach we adopt has been very successful over a number of years.

Possible Year 10 Option Blocks 2020-2021

Option Block A	Option Block B	Option Block C	Option Block D
History	History	History	History
Geography	Geography	Geography	Geography
French	French	French	French
	German	German	Spanish
* Art and Design Textiles	Computer Science		Computer Science
Art and Design	Art and Design	Art and Design	Art and Design
Business Studies	Business Studies	Business Studies	Business Studies
Design Technology with Systems	Design Technology with Papers and Boards	Design Technology with Papers and Boards	Design Technology with Systems
Music	Design Technology with Timber	DIT (Digital Information Technology)	Design Technology with Timber
Health and Social Care	DIT (Digital Information Technology)	Health and Social Care	Drama
Food Preparation and Nutrition	Food Preparation and Nutrition	Food Preparation and Nutrition	Food Preparation and Nutrition
Child Development	Child Development		
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
	Philosophy and Ethics	Applied Studies	Applied Studies

* If a student opts for Art and Design Textiles, they will not be able to opt for the Art and Design Course.

Computer Science is available as an option for those students whose academic performance in Year 9 suggests they can cope with this course.

Students can only take one Design Technology Course from DT with Systems, DT with Papers and Boards or DT with Timber.