



03 December 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

Year 9 GCSE Options Process

The Spring term of Year 9 sees the formal launch of the GCSE Options process at Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge. I wanted to write to outline the timeline and share some initial information with you today.

Attached is a document that provides some information about the wider educational landscape with respect to Key Stage 4 qualifications. It also contains some key terms that you will hear mentioned over the course of the Options process and throughout Key Stage 4.

This morning Year 9 students completed a 'Straw Poll'. This is a non-binding survey which help me identify which subjects are likely to be viable for GCSE option groups and indicates whether we may have a recruitment need. I would like to extend my thanks to the students for completing these surveys with great maturity this morning in the extended assembly. For students who are absent I have organised through Google Classroom for them to have access to the information and submit their ideas.

An outline of the process is as follows:

- **Straw poll (Dec):** A non-committal indication by the student. Allows for Senior Leaders to develop staffing and curriculum plans and Middle Leaders to identify potential numbers.
- **Making Decisions workshop (Jan):** A 45-minute workshop led by Mrs Hills, (Assistant Head) and Ms Biddiss (Head of Year) on 'thinking for our future': what options lie ahead of us and how to start thinking about our choices. This will take place within the school day.
- **Options Afternoon / Parent Information Evening (Feb):** Afternoon information session for students (explain process, hand out curriculum booklets). That Evening a parent information evening and Options fayre providing opportunity to ask staff additional questions.
- **Subject Taster Sessions (Feb):** Subject staff have the opportunity to use timetabled lesson time to showcase GCSE curriculum
- **Options Deadline (Feb):** All student options forms returned
- **Induction (June):** Following the completion of the allocations, students complete an induction to each of their options. Typically, this includes a 2-hour session for each subject and a summer task being set.
- On completing induction – **confirmation of subject choices** is sent to parents (**July**)

To further support the students, we have set up a GCSE Options Google Classroom where all the information and support materials will be added so they can refer back to the information throughout the process. The code for this classroom is **prmsmdx** and I would be grateful if you can encourage your son/daughter to join.

Yours sincerely

Miss E Bliss
Deputy Head