



Heckmondwike Grammar School
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Headteacher: Mr N Bulley

Year 8 parents

Dear Parent/Carer

You may be aware that last term we undertook a full review of our school curriculum and in so doing consulted all staff, governors, year groups of students who may be affected and parents if they attended the consultation evening on Thursday 9 November. There are a number of outcomes from the review and I am writing to you now with important information which will affect your son/daughter.

The consultation gave a very clear appetite from all the parties identified above to start the teaching of GCSEs in Year 9 and so have three years studying the harder and more extensive GCSE specifications recently introduced by the government. Currently, students have two years of GCSE study, Years 10 and 11. It is felt by all concerned that there will be a very clear advantage in having more time to prepare students for their GCSEs.

The consultation also raised the question of the current situation at Heckmondwike Grammar School of a modern foreign language (Spanish or French) being compulsory at GCSE. Having given very careful consideration to this issue, it has been decided to make the studying of a modern foreign language at GCSE optional. For absolute clarity, this means in practice that should your son/daughter wish to continue studying the modern foreign language they can do so through to GCSE. However, if they do not want to continue this language then the new system will allow them to stop at the end of year 8.

To clarify, the curriculum for your son/daughter from September 2018 will be comprised of GCSEs in English Language, English Literature, Mathematics (some students will undertake an extra Maths qualification, depending which set they are in), Physics, Biology and Chemistry. There will then be four free choices from all the remaining subjects.

During week commencing Monday 22 January you will be given an options booklet which details all the subjects available, to allow you to support your son/daughter in making an informed decision. Following this, there will be an Options Information Evening on Thursday 8 February at 6pm in the Swann Hall, entry via the North Street entrance. During this evening I will give a presentation to parents and students and then there will be an opportunity to speak directly to subject staff. Following this there will be a deliberately long window before final decisions need to be made by students with a deadline of Friday 23 March.

On Monday 15 January, I will deliver an assembly to all Year 8 students to explain the process and answer any questions at that stage. This will be backed up by input from the Careers department during registration and skills lessons, along with the usual support and guidance from form teachers.

In summary, we are pleased with the outcome of the curriculum review as there was very clear guidance, which was consistent from all parties during the consultation process. As such, we feel there is great benefit to your son/daughter in implementing the changes outlined above.

I very much look forward to meeting you on Thursday 8 February at the Options Information Evening and do hope that you are able to attend. **Please complete the attached reply slip below and return it to your son/daughter's form teacher by Friday 19 January to indicate your attendance.**

Yours faithfully



Peter Roberts
Deputy Headteacher

Reply Slip

Student Name: _____ Form: _____

We will/we not be attending the Year 8 Options Evening on Thursday 8 February 2018.

Please reserve _____ Seats (max 3)

Signed: _____ Date: _____