

26th January 2021

Reference: Year 9 selecting optional subjects for Year 10 and 11

Dear Parent / Carer,

The start of February is (for me, at least!) synonymous with Year 9 Options *Evening*. Clearly this year we are going to have to do things differently.

The process of the current Year 9 choosing their optional subjects for Years 10 and 11 begins in earnest later this week. I will be emailing every student in Year 9 and using social media to advertise to them that the process is around the corner; attempting as much as possible to ensure they realise the importance of the occasion (even though they are at a distance).

After that the timeline is as follows:

Wednesday 3rd February

All of our Year 9 Options materials will go 'live' on our website. This will include:

- two video presentations (one aimed at parents and one at students) by myself and my colleague Miss Holly Harding, who is our Head of Careers, Advice and Guidance.
- a PDF handbook that:
 - outlines the process in detail, including the two pathways;
 - has a list of optional subjects;
 - has a list of web resources for students and families can use to get advice and support and further careers information;
 - some case studies.
- a webpage for each optional subject that has:
 - a video presentation from the Head of Department or lead on that course that includes
 - what students will study;
 - what a typical sequence of lessons looks like;
 - how students will be assessed;
 - what skills students will develop and where the subject might take them;
 - a full PDF breakdown of the curriculum for that course in Years 10 and 11.
- a private question and answer mechanism for parents and students as follows:
 - General questions area where questions will go to a pool of leadership and careers team staff to respond to.
 - Course question areas. Questions posed here will go to the relevant Head of Department and his/her team to respond to.
 - Answers will be received via email.

Questions received by Wednesday 10th February will be answered by Friday 12th February. We will endeavour to answer all questions after the 10th February as soon as possible.

Thursday 11th February

Year 9 (virtual) Parents' Evening. Information on signing up for this will be available soon but suffice to say it is an opportunity to discuss the prospects of continuing with a given subject into Year 10 and 11.

Monday 22nd February (the first day after half term)

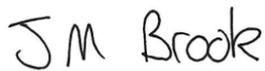
Deadline for students to submit their choices online on the DSHS Launchpad via Office 365 (specific information on this to follow).

Summary

The process of making choices to decide a young person's curriculum for their last two years at High School is an incredibly important one. I am grateful in advance for your efforts in supporting your child(ren) and, having reviewed our materials today, I am optimistic that our resources and support will allow you and them to make decisions in a fully informed manner.

I would hope that you will be happy to wait until the 3rd February before raising any questions. However, if you have any immediate concerns please do get in touch.

Yours faithfully,



Mr J M Brook
Deputy Headteacher