

Good evening, we are delighted to see so many of you here.

Over the next few weeks all Year 8 students will be making some extremely important, but difficult decisions related to their academic studies. It is our job to make sure that each child is fully prepared, supported and informed to ensure that they make the right decisions.

I am now going to spend a few minutes outlining how we have been working and will continue to work with your children to ensure they are in the best possible position to make the right choices.

The preparation for this process has already started. The students were given an assembly this morning where they were told about the options process in some detail.

Students have also been directed to our Careers room on Fronter, which has a wealth of information. It contains presentations from many of the courses available to study in KS4. These presentations outline the areas of study and information about the different subjects. There are also links to various career related websites which give guidance on subject choices as well as information on different career paths.

Your child will have taster lessons in the next few weeks in any subjects which are available to them that they do not currently study. They will also be able to discuss subject choices with their teachers during lessons, at break, lunch or after school. We very much encourage them to do this.

Our careers advisor, Mrs Foster, has also been available at both break and lunchtimes to meet with students to discuss any aspect of the options process or anything linked to careers. Each form has attended a session in the careers room where they were introduced to the software and information resources available to them.

The students were given their options form this morning. During registration, they will discuss and complete these forms with the guidance of their form tutors. During their parents'/carers' evening on the 2nd March, students will have a one to one appointment with a Year 8 Co-ordinator or a senior member of staff to discuss their final choices. Please can I remind you that the format of the parents'/carers' evening has changed – it is no longer split alphabetically between two days. Therefore, the Year 8 parents'/carers' evening is on Wednesday 2nd March, 3pm – 7:30pm.

The purpose of these one to one meetings is so that your children can discuss their choices and utilise their teachers' experience. During these meetings, staff will be checking that each student has made the best possible choices for themselves academically. Our main priority is to ensure that students are equipped for success.

Students are allowed to hand in their options forms to their form tutors any day after their parents'/carers' evening. The final deadline is 15th March whereby all options forms must be returned to form tutors.

I will now hand you over to Mr Murrell...

Good evening. I would like to explain a little more about how we can work together to ensure your child chooses the courses that are right for them.

All Year 8 students have received an Options Booklet, outlining all the courses available to them. This contains a summary of each course and what your child can expect to cover in that course. It also covers the possibilities of where it could lead.

Mrs Dodd has already spoken about the support that your children will be offered in school. It is very important that you ask to see the booklet so that you can discuss which Options to take next year with your child. These discussions have of course already begun with their form tutors every Friday morning as part of their Personal Development Programme.

To make the very best of their GCSE options and courses, your children must ensure that they make an informed decision about them. Please can you make sure that your child makes appointments with **all** of their teachers at the forthcoming parents'/carers' evenings on Wednesday 2nd March, 3pm – 7:30pm and not only the ones which they are considering as one of their GCSE Options.

To help your child meet deadlines and prepare for exams, it is vital that they use their diary as they will be using it extensively in Year 9. By closely monitoring your child's diary it enables you to keep up to date with their progress and it is also used as a tool to communicate directly with staff if you have any concerns or feedback. **We would also like to encourage you regularly check your child's 'Show My Homework' account to support them to meet homework deadlines.**

Your children really do matter to us. We will continue to support each and every one of them as they progress from Year 8 into KS4. Our outstanding team of Form Tutors will continue to support your children over the next three years, and the high standard of day to day guidance and caring that they provide will continue as they move into Years 9, 10, 11 and beyond.

Thank you for your time and ongoing support. I will now hand over to Ms Moriarty to provide you with further information about the options process.