

Dear Parent/Carer

June 2018

Humanities Lessons in Year 9

Over the past few weeks we have been supporting our Year 11 students through their GCSE exams. This group of students have impressed us with their work ethic and motivation. We are, and will be, proud of all their achievements. We know that working hard and putting in the effort at home and at school will pay off in increased opportunities.

This is especially so since this year group have been the first to sit new GCSEs in many of their subjects. We were always led to believe that these new qualifications would be harder and more challenging than the old GCSEs, however, we have still been surprised by the amount of new content and skills we have had to cover, and worried about the overall impact on the wellbeing of our students, and the amount of support we have made available to them.

In discussions with school leaders, we have considered ways in which we can further support future students to be best prepared for these new qualifications. Students who will be in Year 11 next year will be taking one less GCSE and this will help them to be more successful, having greater time to study a smaller number of courses. However, we feel we need to do more to help our students.

We are going to ask those students who are currently in Year 8 and entering Year 9 at the end of this term to choose between History or Geography, rather than studying both subjects. We have found that these have been two of the hardest new GCSEs, with the greatest amount of new content. Some schools have all of their students choose between subjects in Year 9, we feel that this compromise allows us to keep the range of subjects in the curriculum, particularly the Arts, but helps deliver the extra content in a reasonable way.

By choosing one of the humanities subjects, students will have 4 periods per fortnight to study that subject rather than 2 for each of the subjects. This will, we believe, have a significant impact on workload and preparation for GCSE courses. We have made a provision for a small number of students to still take both subjects, studying 2 periods per fortnight on each one. However, this can only be put in place if we feel that students can keep up with the pace of those who are studying the subject over 4 periods per fortnight.

Please could I ask that you discuss this choice with your child and complete the slip attached to indicate your child's choice and return it to reception by Monday 9 July 2018. These lessons will begin from 16th July. If you have any queries about this change, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Mrs White (Subject Leader of Geography) or Miss Millatt (Subject Leader of History).

Yours sincerely



Mr A Edmonds
Headteacher



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Name of Student Tutor Group

Choice of Option: Geography History

Signature of Parent/Carer

Name of Parent/Carer

Date

Please return this form to Reception by Monday 9 July 2018