

Parent / Carer's Options Information  
Transcript

0:02 Hello and thank you for joining me. I'm Ms Brighty-Glover and I'm going to be supporting and heading up the options process this year.

0:09 In the PowerPoint, I'm going to be outlining the timeline and process for the GCSE options as well as detailing all the support available to your child in coming over the next few weeks.

0:20 Firstly, we'll start with the compulsory subjects that your child will be taking. These are referred to as core subjects. Starting with English language and literature, these are taught together across the two-week timetable.

0:33 They will also be studying GCSE maths, combined science which is equivalent to two GCSEs as well as GCSE Spanish. Also on the timetable next year they will have core PE and core PSICHE which are both non-examine subjects.

0:50 Now the students will be taking a humanities option as part of their English baccalaureate or EBAAC study. The first part of the options process will be for students to choose between history or geography. There is, however, an option for students to take both should they require or should they want to. This is an option that has proved incredibly popular over the last three years. Now to do this, students will need to choose history as their humanities option and geography in place of one of their open option choices.

1:22 Now at Hallmead we are very proud to offer students with a real wide range of different subjects. Students have the choice of arts, business studies, child development, computer science, drama and D.T, as well as food and nutrition, media, music, PE and sport studies, religious studies as well as triple science. Now students will be required to choose two of these subjects.

1:45 However, they will also be required when entering to choose two reserve subjects. They must be prepared to study these. With over 210 students to timetable and only 14 subjects on offer, on a rare occasion students may be asked to choose their reserved subject.

2:04 When subjects enter their choices into the options online form, a process I'll explain more on shortly, it's important and imperative that the first subject they enter is the subject they want them to.

2:15 The most. That will enable us to prioritise and formulate an appropriate GCSE programme. So what should students base their decision making on? Two years is a long time and once the choices are made, it becomes almost impossible to shift their subjects. So we implore them to think about the balance of subjects and passion in our choices.

2:37 At this point, students and parents have access to the updated options booklet which is available on the school website under the Year 9 curriculum area.

2:47 In addition, students will be receiving subject talks from the heads of department during the weeks beginning 27th February to the 6th of March.

2:57 In addition, students will have the opportunity to attend an options Q&A fair with not only subject teachers and heads of department but current year 10 and year 11 students.

3:08 This is a pupil-only event run after school on the 7th of March. The aim of students attending an event where there are current year 10 and year 11 students is to give them more impartial advice on the realities of studying these subjects.

3:23 However, as well as all this going on in school, it's important that students have a dialogue with their parents and carers about what's involved in the subjects and the skills needed to be successful.

3:36 It may also be a good idea to have discussions around future aspirations. If they are unsure, keeping their options as wide as possible may be a good idea.

3:46 And finally, just to reiterate, students should be ready to study their reserve subjects. We don't want students to put just any option in that slot, just in case it becomes a part of their GCSE course.

3:58 Now, in order to guide these discussions, I want to share with you some of the positive reasons for choosing a subject.

4:06 Firstly, we'll start with the content and delivery. The content and delivery of the course should be exciting and interest students.

4:12 Without an interest, students will find it more challenging to apply themselves. Also, considering whether the subject provides enough breadth and balance their curriculum, it also may be worth considering whether they want to take a course with an element of coursework or NEA, as well as a portfolio

4:31 . For some students, this would be a real challenge to manage, but for others the balance of a written exam with coursework or portfolio is a real added bonus.

4:41 Students may not have considered future plans at college or careers at this point, but please encourage them to do their research.

4:49 Some A levels and B-texts don't require specific GCSEs, but many do. Finally, considering if it's a subject they take already, are they doing well at it?

5:00 Part of the enjoyment is the balance of passion with attainment and being successful. Now, before we look at the road map ahead and the timeline, it may be worth a dialogue with your child about poor choices and reasons to not choose a subject.

5:18 Now in the past, we have had students who have picked poorly and have picked them for the following reasons, including basing their curriculum choices on friendship groups.

5:27 Even if they do choose the same options, they may not be placed on the same side of the year or even the same class.

5:35 Equally choosing based on previous teachers that they've had previously. Students are not guaranteed to have a classroom teacher that they have had in Key Stage 3. Now, all GCSEs are different, so choosing an easy sounding one is a bit of a fallacy. All this GCSEs are rigorous and demanding.

5:54 Finally, some students choose GCSEs based on an opinion or reverence some people may have for certain subjects. Students should remember a poor grade will not look impressive on a CV no matter what the subject.

6:07 Students should base their choices based on their own interest and attainment. So what happens next? Over the next few weeks students should be having conversations with yourselves and their teachers.

6:20 The options booklet is live on our website and should students require an interview or conversation with myself, their form tutor or head of year, we will all be available to them.

6:31 Any emails or concerns they or you have can be emailed to me directly using the HMS-options email address on the screen.

6:41 Now students will be entering their choices using the options online in computing lessons in the week commencing 25th March. Once these have been processed, any issues will be dealt with directly with the student in question and once processed and confirmed, students will receive a letter confirming

6:59 their choices. Once their decisions have been made due to the very complex web of timetable, it will be incredibly difficult to change.

7:07 So please, over the next few weeks, encourage students to really think through their decisions. Thank you for listening. If you have any concerns or queries, please feel free to email me on the email address on the screen.