

Dear Parent/Carer,

Update on the KS4 Options process and launch event – Tuesday 23 February 2021

Since my initial letter earlier this half term about the options process we now know that pupils will not be returning until at least Monday 8 March and therefore we will need to run our options process virtually.

Options briefing event

This will run online over Microsoft Teams on **Tuesday 23 February from 5.30-6.30pm**. Pupils will need to log into the event using this [link](#) with their Whickham School account (as they would do for a live lesson). This link will also be emailed to all pupils and parents before the event. Mr Turnbull and I will run through the process in more detail. There will be an opportunity to ask questions through the Q&A chat feature. A recording will be available after the event if you are unable to attend live.

Launching simultaneously will be our options website which can be accessed through the [Learning>Our Curriculum>Key Stage 4](#) section of the website. This will contain a copy of our detailed options booklet as well as video/powerpoint presentations that have been put together from specialist staff in each subject area.

Options form and guidance process

Pupils will be emailed a copy of their personalised options form on **Wednesday 24 February** which details the options that they can choose from. This form allows pupils to select subjects based on a personalised pathway. We spend a lot of time thinking about the pathway that is right for each pupil. However if you would like to discuss the pathway further please do not hesitate to get in contact with me at school (pwheatley@whickhamschool.org).

From **Thursday 25 February** senior staff will make appointments to talk to pupils about their thoughts and ideas in small groups through Microsoft Teams. Pupils will be emailed times of their appointments and a meeting will appear in their Teams calendar. Feedback from previous years has been that pupils value the opportunity to discuss thoughts in small groups. If for any reason we are unable to speak to your child as part of this meeting we will arrange a phone call instead.

Pupils will need to **return their options form electronically through our options portal website**. They will receive an email about how to do this; the username and password will be the same username and password they use to log in to their school email account. Forms can be completed at any time after they have had their meeting with senior staff. The deadline for return of **on time** options forms is **Friday 5 March 2021** (please note that this a change to the previously published date) . The overwhelming majority of pupils who return their forms online are able to study their first choice of subject options.

We are confident that we can provide the same level of information and support as we would usually do in our usual face to face meetings and events. Pupils are however welcome to speak to myself or other colleagues in person (suitably socially distanced) on their return if they have any further questions.

Yours faithfully,

Mr P Wheatley
Deputy Headteacher