

Friday 15th February 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

Re: Year 8 Options Event

I am writing to you to inform you of the arrangements for preparing your child for the next phase in their secondary education. As you are probably aware, students in Year 8 have historically made “soft option” subject choices ready for study in Year 9, then begun their GCSE proper study in Year 10. Following review of best practice in many schools, we are delighted to inform you that we are now in a position to be able to offer your child the opportunity to make their GCSE Option selections this year, to begin study in Year 9. Many schools across the country have already moved to this model and we feel that the time is right for Smestow students to be able to do this. The benefits of choosing their options for study in Year 9 are:

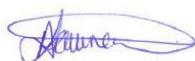
- Students spend 3 years, rather than two, preparing for their vitally important GCSE examinations, which means they are more prepared.
- Due to extended, focused study time, we would expect your child’s achievement at GCSE to increase.
- Subjects are able to spend more time and go into more depth with their GCSE topics.
- Students can spend more time studying the subjects they have chosen to do, they have already had 2 years of a broad and balanced curriculum, giving them an opportunity to specialise more in Year 9 meaning that they are more motivated and engaged.

To support you and your child with this decision, we will be holding an “Option Event” after school on **Thursday 7th March 2019**: full details will be sent to you after the half term holiday. At this event, you will receive information regarding your child’s progress in each of the subjects that they currently study and be able to talk to subject specialist about their likely success in areas they may wish to study for GCSE. Our Senior Leadership Team will share a presentation with you to explain the options process and guide you as to the things to consider when supporting your child to make their choice. Following the event, students will have some time to consider their choices before being asked to make their primary selection by Monday 18th March 2019. Following this date, we will speak to all children individually to ensure they have made the right decisions and confirm their subjects to you around the Easter Holiday.

This is a very exciting and important time in your child’s life and we hope you are able to join us on 7th March to find out more about our options process.

Finally, as with each data collection, please be aware that there may be some set changes for students following the holiday. Any class moves we make are with the best interests of your child. Please contact us, if you have any queries.

Yours faithfully



Angie Lawrence

Head of School



A member of the Education Central Multi Academy
Trust, University of Wolverhampton

