Friday, 16th October 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

With students now fully settled back into school, I thought I would write to inform you of the processes that will follow later in the year with regard to students selecting subjects for study in Key Stage 4 (KS4), from September 2018 onwards.

At Oldbury, we operate a process called *Pathways*, where students are placed onto particular guided pathways which will determine the subjects they will study as they move into KS4. The rationale behind *Pathways* is to ensure students leave Oldbury having maximised their academic potential, and giving them the best possible chance of succeeding in extremely competitive world when they leave school.

We have a number of different pathways, and different students will be placed onto different pathways depending on their academic profile. This is determined by a series of assessments that will take place over this academic year, as well as a consideration of other factors such as KS2 grades (which act as a 'starting point' for how progress is measured), behaviour and conduct in subjects and overall performance in school. Different pathways will determine which subjects can be chosen for study in KS4.

Pathways is different to *Options*, where students are given a free-choice to select any subject for study in KS4, regardless of ability or opportunity to maximise potential. National research shows us that the *Options* model is ineffective and does not enable students to leave with the best possible outcomes.

With regard to our preparation for the launch of *Pathways*, I would like to share the following dates with you -

Thursday 15 February 2018	First Pathways Assembly for year 9 students - *Pathways* introduction
Thursday 15 February 2018	Year 9 Parents Evening
Thursday 15 March 2018	Second Pathways Assembly for year 9 students - *Pathways* Launch
Monday 19 March 2018	Information goes to students regarding their own pathway including subject choices that are open to them
Monday 19 March-Tuesday 27 March 2018	Full programme of form-time activities focusing on subject choices
Wednesday 28 March 2018	Pathways Evening* for **all** year 9 students and parents
Thursday 29 March 2018	Subject selection process** goes live for students and parents

*Please ensure you attend this event in order to discuss possible subject choices with teachers.

**This is an online selection process which requires us to have parents mobile phone numbers. Please ensure we have your accurate details.

At this stage, no action is required from parents or students, but conversations about potential subject choices between students and teachers are always beneficial and will aid this process. Students in year 9 should continue to apply themselves in all of their subjects and continue what has been an excellent start to the academic year.

If you have any questions about *Pathways* please do not hesitate to email us at pathways@oldburyacademy.org.uk. I look forward to meeting you later in the academic year.

May I also take this opportunity to wish you and your family and restful and relaxing half term break.

Kind regards,

James Cannon
Assistant Headteacher - Curriculum

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