

Our Ref: NTH

Date: 10th November 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Year 9 Pathways 2020/2021

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 2021 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.

This year, we are planning on making all our information available for Pathways virtually as a precaution due to the current climate. It is our intention to present insightful information regarding GCSE options on our website so that you can browse through this information at your leisure. We will endeavour to make this information available on our website by January 2021 and will forward you the link via a text message. There will also be an online process for the selection of GCSE options which will go live on **Wednesday 3rd of February 2021**. Please ensure that we have accurate contact details for you as the majority of the information will be sent out to you via text messages.

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 communicating with you later in the academic year.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Thomas – Assistant Headteacher Curriculum
Oldbury Academy