



Our Ref: BB/cco/OptionsM

March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Year 8 Options 2021

I hope this finds you well; it is uplifting to be writing to you at a time when your child has now returned to face-to-face lessons at school. In the September 2019 when your child joined Oldbury Wells, none of us could have envisaged the circumstances that we now live under, or the adjustments that your child has had to make in terms of their education. It is to the students' credit that they have coped so well.

It is now time for your child to progress onto the next phase of their educational journey and choose the subjects that they will be studying at Key Stage 4, and eventually taking examinations in. The options process is an important step in a student's education. It is often the time when many will first start to think about their future beyond school, including university, apprenticeships and possible future careers.

As a school, it is our responsibility to ensure that the choices your child makes are the correct ones. At Oldbury Wells, the Head of Year, form tutor, key stage support workers and of course their subject teachers will all spend time with your child helping them to decide which is the most suitable subjects for them to take. In addition, they will receive a comprehensive Options booklet, which gives details about the courses at Oldbury Wells throughout Key Stage 4, as well as detailed guidance on how to make the best choices.

Unfortunately, due to current Covid restrictions we are unable to hold our normal Options Information Evening. To compensate for this, I have recorded a presentation that covers all the key information about the options process. It is a virtual version of what I would have presented to you if I had been able to meet you in person. Subject leaders have also recorded presentations that cover indepth information relating to their own specific KS4 courses. ***It is important that you and your child watch the presentation and all the subject presentations that are of interest to them before making any option choices.*** These presentations will go live on our website from Tuesday, 16th March.

We will also be holding a virtual Options Evening on **Thursday, 25th March**, when parents/students will have the opportunity to book slots (similar to that of a normal parents' evening) to speak with subject staff on a one-to-one basis and to assist you with subject specific questions that students have been unable to ask at school. Please make sure you have watched the subject presentation prior to the appointment as appointment times are only 5 minutes long. The booking system will go live on **Tuesday, 16th March** and you will receive an information letter via text on the day about how to log in and use the system.

To keep you further informed, on **Monday, 22nd March** the Options Preference Form will become available. Again, information regarding how to access and complete this will be sent via text.

Continued/...

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Some students may already have a clear idea of what pathway or career they would like to follow, whilst others may be unsure of what they wish to do in the future. When it comes to choosing options, students should always consider these three things - their **ability** within the subject, how much they **enjoy** the subject, and is the subject **relevant** to what they wish to achieve in the future.

All students will take GCSE's in English Language, English Literature, and Mathematics. Students will then have the chance to choose from a selection of subjects; some of which are studied at GCSE; whilst the others gain BTEC or Cambridge National qualifications, these are GCSE equivalent vocational qualifications. The GCSE subjects consist of the traditional EBacc subjects, History, Geography, Computer Science, Spanish and French, along with triple science (where they gain separate GCSE's in Biology, Chemistry and Physics). In addition, there is the choice of GCSEs in Art, Business studies, Food technology, Resistant Materials, Textiles, Drama, Philosophy & Religion and PE. The assessment of Art, Food, Textiles, RM, Drama, PE will also include a practical element. The vocational subjects on offer are Creative i-Media, Health and Social Care, Music and Sports studies. The vocational subjects examined use a combination of internal assessment (coursework) and external examinations to calculate the final grade and give students qualifications equivalent to a GCSE.

Whatever decision your child makes, we wish it to be an informed one. It is important that their choices will allow them to **aspire** to the future they wish to follow, **enjoy** the subjects they have chosen to take and **achieve** the examination results that they require to realise their goals.

Yours sincerely



Mr B. Brown
Assistant Headteacher

Please note that in this booklet the terms 'parent' and 'parents' include others with parental responsibility.

Key Dates:

Tuesday 16th March

- Options Evening Information video is available on the school website
- Subject Specific Information videos are available on the school website
- Online Booking System is available to book appointments for Virtual Options Evening

Monday 22nd March

- Options Preference Form available online

Thursday 25th March

- Virtual Options Evening

