



16 December 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

### Year 8 Assessment Week and Options – Information for Parents and Students

I am writing to further inform you of the important events taking place in the next few weeks, which aim to offer guidance and support for both you and your child regarding their option choices. The calendared dates are shown below:

Date	Event	Details
11-15 January	Year 8 Assessment Week	Students will be assessed on their learning during their lessons.
19 January	Key Stage 4 booklet	Options booklet containing information about the options process and the subjects your child can opt for.
19 January	Options form published	The form to be filled in to express your child's preferences. This will contain a recommendation about the types of subjects your child is best suited to study.
19 January	Options Taster Day	Students will receive a 30 minute 'taster' session in the following subjects: Business Studies, Economics, Computer Science, Creative iMedia, Drama, Music, PE, Photography, Product Design and Food and Nutrition.
21 January	Option Information published on website	Information videos from the Curriculum Leaders of each option subject will be available on the school website. These will provide key information regarding each subject area.
28 January	Key Stage 4 6.00pm Options Evening	Information about the options process and the opportunity to ask questions to the Curriculum Leaders of the optional subjects.
08 February	Report	Data Collection Point 2 provides a report from your child's current subject teachers.*
24 <sup>th</sup> February-5 <sup>th</sup> March	Individual Student Meeting	Each Year 8 student will meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team for 10 minutes to discuss their options.
25 February	Year 8 Progress Meeting	An opportunity to meet with your child's current teachers to discuss progress. Mrs Gibbs will also be available to discuss the options process and selections with you.
1 March (PM)	Options surgeries	15-minute consultations by appointment with Mrs Gibbs for parents and students who may have further questions or issues about the options.
3 March (AM)	Options surgeries	15-minute consultations by appointment with Mrs Gibbs for parents and students who may have further questions or issues about the options.
5 March (AM)	Option form submission deadline	Option forms must be submitted by Year 8 students to their tutor.

*\*DCP data is available via the SIMS Parent App. If you have not yet signed up and wish to do so, please refer to the instructions on our website [here](#). An email invite will be sent to all those parents who have not yet registered to facilitate this.*

### **Assessment week 11 -15 January**

As you are aware, our Year 8 students will be sitting the new GCSEs when they reach Year 11. These examinations not only have different subject content compared to the old GCSEs, but they also have a greater emphasis on the ability to do well in exam conditions and to remember information.

One way, we believe, to help prepare the students is for them to become familiar with preparing for examinations. They can explore different revision styles, write a revision plan, become familiar with the feeling of sitting examinations and how they can act on the feedback they are given afterwards.

I want to reassure you this is not a pass or fail exercise and feedback will be provided by all teachers to students, together with work they will be able to complete to improve their grade in the future.

All subjects will be doing an exam or written assessment with your child during this assessment week. Over the next few school weeks we will be talking to the students about how they can revise and make revision plans.

Their subject teachers will provide them with information about which topics they need to revise and the format of the assessment.

It is our expectation that in addition to the homework they are receiving from their usual lessons that they will also be spend time revising for this assessment week.

### **Options Booklet, Recommended Pathway and Option Form**

On Tuesday 19 January, your child will be given an options booklet in advance of the Options Evening. A letter giving the school's recommendation as to which curriculum pathway your child should follow including an options form will also be given out. This form should be filled in and returned by **Friday 5 March**.

The options booklet can be used, in conjunction with the information evening and progress meetings, to help you and your child make options choices.

### **Curriculum Pathways**

To help guide students and parents in their selection of subjects we place all students into Options Pathways. These **do not** represent any kind of streaming or setting process. Rather, they are a means of guiding students and parents towards the subjects that experience has shown those students in that particular pathway are likely to succeed in.

These pathways are:

Blue – students are required to study the English Baccalaureate (please see below for further details).

Green – the majority of students are advised to study the English Baccalaureate but may not do so if they choose not to opt to study a language.

Yellow – students are not required to study the English Baccalaureate and will have an increased number of practical or vocational subjects available to them.

## Core Curriculum

Irrespective of their pathway, all students will study for GCSEs in:

- English Language and Literature;
- Mathematics;
- Science;
- At least one of History or Geography;
- Religious Studies.

## English Baccalaureate

The majority of students in Year 8 will be required to study those subjects that make up what is known as the English Baccalaureate. These are English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science, History or Geography and a Modern Foreign Language (French or Spanish).

## Economics and Computer Studies

Some subjects have entry requirements

- Computer Science – 3L in Mathematics by the time of the report in February 2021
- Economics- 3L in both Mathematics and English by the time of the report in February 2021

## Options Information Evening

There will be an Options Information Evening for all Year 8 parents and students on Thursday 28 January 2021.

Students and their parents are invited to attend a Zoom meeting at 6pm. The meeting will give an outline of the options process and the factors that students and their parents should consider. When the presentation is over at approximately 6.20pm, parents and students will have the opportunity to ask any questions to the curriculum leaders of option subjects. Please ensure you have watched the relevant presentations on the school website in advance.

I should stress that this is **not** an evening to discuss the progress of individual students.

## Parents' Evening

Parent consultation meetings where you have an opportunity to meet with your child's subject staff are scheduled for Thursday 25 February. Please note that students are encouraged to attend. Appointments can be made nearer the time via the Parents Evening System.

## The Consultation Sessions

On Monday 1 March (PM) and Wednesday 3 March (AM), I will be available to answer any questions that you may still have about your child's options. To book one of the available 15-minute appointments, please contact the school's reception via [meroffice@maidenerleghtrust.org](mailto:meroffice@maidenerleghtrust.org) from 10am on 22 February. Your child will also be able to attend the meeting if you wish. A Zoom link will be sent in advance, please make sure that the school has your current email address.

Any further questions regarding the Year 8 Options process, please contact the school office and your query will be passed on to the relevant person.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Gibbs', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Mrs S Gibbs**  
Deputy Headteacher