

Tuesday 7th December 2021

Dear Parent or Carer,

It's that stage in your child's school journey when it's time to start thinking about choosing GCSEs or equivalents; this process is referred to as options. This is an exciting and sometimes worrying time for all involved. Don't be concerned; we will do everything we can to guide your child, and you, through the process.

You will soon be provided with an options booklet that contains all the information you will require to support your child through this process. It is important that you read through the information in the booklet, even if you have been through the options process before with other children, the process is slightly different every year.

We are providing you with the options booklet now as we feel it is a great time to begin these discussions at home. We have given students some information about the process so far this year in ARCH days, in focus time and assemblies. Your child has recently been provided with a report and parents' evening is coming up later this week, please use both together with the attached booklet to begin discussions about what choices your child may potentially make.

The options website will be launched following parents' evening to provide you with electronic copies of the booklet and links to videos produced by staff in every option subject providing further information for you and your child to consider. We would recommend that all students consider the EBacc pathway as an excellent framework for making their options choices as it may well ensure greater opportunities in further education.

The process will continue following the Christmas holiday with additional information and guidance, this process is outlined on the back of this letter so you can refer to it easily, it is also on page 3 of the options booklet.

This is a hugely important time within your child's education, with them having the first opportunity to make informed choices about the curriculum they want to study. Whilst these choices will not limit the future opportunities of students, they may well guide them along different paths. As a result, the choices made by our students are very important, we look forward to working closely with you over the next few months.

Whilst we want students to make an informed choice for their options, we would not expect students to have a definite career path in mind. We have provided options that will allow all students to follow a broad and balanced curriculum that will provide students great foundations to build on. Subsequently, we promote students making choices based on subjects they enjoy and where they can develop a love of learning that they can build upon later on in their education and careers to allow them to unlock their unique potential.

Please contact your child's form tutor in the first instance if you have any questions regarding this process; we are here to help and we will do our very best to guide you and your child through this process.

Should you still have questions, do not hesitate to email me: a.nalborczyk@todhigh.co.uk.

Kind regards

Andrew Nalborczyk
Assistant Headteacher



Enabling individuals to unlock their unique potential

THS has recently switched to using buff paper for printing services. Our paper is 100% recycled.

The Options Journey in 2021-22

(Dates may be subject to slight variation.)

December 2021

Student Data Check Reports. Please use your child's attainment grades and attitude to learning scores to identify the subjects your child is performing well in as this will help guide some of the decisions you make with your child.

Options booklet sent out. Please spend some time having initial discussions around which subjects would suit both your child's interests and skills. Make sure you think of questions to ask teachers at the upcoming parents' evening. It can also be helpful to think of which subjects may help with any post-16 ambitions students already hold. Please keep this booklet safe and come back to it as students often change their minds! If you do need additional copies/further information, please visit the options page on the school website.

Y9 Parents' Evening. Please use this opportunity to speak to teachers about the suitability of your child taking their subject as an option. This is the first opportunity to get some personal feedback within the process.

January 2022

Focus Time will be used to provide specific information about all the subjects that we hope to offer. Students will watch videos about each subject, followed by a question-and-answer session with the subject leader or teacher.

Wednesday 19th January (16:30-18:30)

Options Evening (virtual) there will be a presentation via Microsoft Teams explaining the options process and subject teachers will be on hand to discuss the content of the subject and your child's suitability. Our careers advisor Rob Stoakes and various post-16 providers will also be present for you to consider how your option choices will support your next steps after Year 11. In addition, students will also be provided with a straw poll form to indicate which subjects they wish to choose. This is not a final choice, but it allows us to put together the blocks to accommodate the largest possible number of students.

Tuesday 1st February

Straw poll form deadline. We work with the information from the straw poll to ensure we can support as many students to study their option choices as possible; however, we can't promise that all ranges of option choices will be available.

From the straw poll, we put the subjects into combinations or 'blocks'. These are given to the students on an options form and the blocks are different every year – according to the results of the straw poll. The school website currently shows the subjects arranged in last year's option blocks; this information will be updated by Monday 8th March.

March 2022

Final options letter sent home with students. Please review this alongside the options booklet and help guide your child to choose their options. The deadline for these forms is **Thursday 24th March**.

Thursday 10th March

Options meeting will take place. You and your child will then attend an options meeting via phone with a member of staff which will help you understand the choices and discuss what is right for your child. The majority of appointments will take place on Thursday 10th March (4pm-6pm), there is flexibility to re-arrange a few of these calls during this week.

Thursday 24th March

Final deadline for options choices. Options will be selected via an online form, more detail will be shared in the final options form. Late responses will delay the options process.

This will be followed by a formal options offer in May. If there is a problem with your child's option choices, we will let you know.