



Diocese of St. Albans



ST MARY'S  
CE HIGH SCHOOL

16 February 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Year 8 Progression into Year 9: 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

In the coming weeks, your son/daughter will be asked to make some decisions that will enable them to personalise their curriculum next year. This process will help them to tailor their Year 9 curriculum to the subjects they enjoy and are good at without the formality of starting GCSE subjects. In a year's time, when your son/daughter is in Year 9, they will then be making more formal decisions about the subjects they would like to study in Years 10 and 11. This is a particularly important process as it will determine their courses in which they will take examinations at the end of Year 11 and will have significant impact on their learning pathways and Post 16 opportunities.

In order to support the process of personalising the curriculum for Year 9, **all Year 8 parents/carers are asked to view an on-line presentation that will be available from the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024. This will support you and your child to understand the curriculum choices and opportunities your child will experience next year. We will email you with a link on the day of the presentation.**

The presentation includes the following information:

- The National picture and increased expectations of the new GCSE and Technical awards
- Rationale for making choices and how the process works
- Subject information to support the selection process
- New subject choices in Year 9

There is a booklet attached with this letter that provides further information about the progression routes their subject choices could take them. The booklet includes information on the current GCSE and Technical awards offer and provides an insight into these subjects. It is important that students read the entire booklet and each GCSE option available to them, **because not selecting subjects in Year 9 consequently means that students may not be able to study that subject in Year 10-11.** However, it is also important to note that the curriculum is under constant review and courses that are currently being offered and are included in this booklet may change by the time that students take their formal options in Year 9 into Year 10/11.

Ahead of watching the presentation with your child, please start to discuss their aspirations for the future, whether they may have plans to go to University or into apprenticeship/training programmes and which particular employment sectors may be of interest to them. Students will also be supported by their year team during tutorials to support the progression process. There is a slide in the presentation that links to the careers and Unifrog programme used by the school to support and facilitate careers advice.

Your son / daughter will need to remain in education or training until the age of 18 and so will need to consider how choices made during this process will influence their future career plans. We ask for your strongest support in watching the presentation and helping us to guide your son/daughter through this process.

Continued...

-2-



WE BELIEVE EVERYONE IS EQUAL: EVERYONE DESERVES THE BEST

Lieutenant Ellis Way, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire EN7 5FB t: 01992 629124  
e: admin@st-maryshigh.herts.sch.uk w: www.st-maryshigh.herts.sch.uk  
Headteacher: Mr Richard Vaughan B.A.(Hons)

*'Students are proud of their school; it prepares them well for adult life'* OFSTED 2023  
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Once your son/daughter is confident about which subjects to select, please complete the online form that can be found using either the QR code below, or this [Link](#).

**Note, the link and QR code below will become active from 7pm on Wednesday 27 March 2024. The deadline for completing the options form is Friday 19 April 2024.**



Yours faithfully

*E Watts*

Mrs E Watts  
Deputy Head Teacher

*S Tilbury*

Mr Simon Tilbury  
Deputy Head Teacher



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