



HIGH STANDARDS, HIGH ASPIRATIONS, HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Dear Parents/Carers,

RE: Change to Options Process for current Year 8

As you may be aware, our students currently select their options for Level 2 study (GCSEs and similarly accredited courses) during Year 8 and start studying them from September of Year 9. Bristol Met have taken this approach, with success, for a number of years and many schools have adopted the same approach over the last few years. This approach is generally known as a '3 Year Key Stage 4' approach.

Following a period of review, we have chosen to return to a 2 year Key Stage 4 approach and will be reverting to this more traditional curriculum approach with immediate effect. This means that current Year 8 students will **not** be selecting their options this year and will instead continue with their current curriculum diet in Year 9, choose their options in Spring 2021 and start studying those courses in September 2021 when they start Year 10. This reflects the amount of time that GCSE courses have been written for, ie two years prior to examination.

One of the key reasons for this change is a change in Government policy, reflected in a clear change within the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework, which came into effect in September 2019. The new framework states that students should study the national curriculum for the duration of Year 7 to Year 9 without narrowing the range of subjects through an options process before the end of Year 9. This is a key change to previous guidance which allowed academies complete flexibility to choose their curriculum approach. We understand that parents (and students) will have thoughts on both approaches. Some will have always thought that choosing in Year 8 was quite early and therefore will be happy with the change. Some will have been happy to have had the choice earlier to focus on subjects they are more drawn to and will have appreciated the additional focus time the options process brings to those subjects.

As an Academy we fully appreciate both sides. Previously we felt that that on balance the 3 year approach served our community well without significantly disadvantaging any group of students. The change in wider national policy means we can no longer adopt such an approach and therefore must move to a 2 year options approach. However, we would like to assure our parents, carers and students that regardless of the change we will continue to ensure high quality curriculum, teaching and behaviour to maintain a culture of success and achievement for our young people as part of a 5 year curriculum experience at Bristol Metropolitan Academy, which is part of a carefully designed 3-19 curriculum across all Cabot Learning Federation schools.

If you would like to offer any feedback on this change then please do feel free to email me on natasha.williams@clf.uk

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

Natasha Williams
Assistant Principal

