

Our ref: PRC/PAS/JUE

14 January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Year 9 Options Process 2021**

At this time of year, focus for Year 9 students needs to move to the Options Process and the selection of a suitable programme of study as they enter Key Stage 4. We believe our pathways curriculum, alongside outstanding teaching and effective intervention, has been one of the major reasons we have had so much academic success over the years.

This process is of vital importance in ensuring that the choices made will allow students to thrive, by realising their academic potential and securing progression that is appropriate to them. We hope that students will select subjects that focus on their interests and talents, creating the passion for learning that supports such success.

We are very proud of the broad and balanced curriculum offer that we are able to provide students and we aim to ensure that students follow courses which are appropriate to their abilities and interests as well as offering the best progression pathway for them into the further study or training that they choose. We very much hope that the vast majority of students will continue to study with us beyond Year 11 by accessing our Sixth Form, but there is a wide range of opportunities available to them as they complete these courses. We will continue to offer impartial careers advice as they approach this stage of their education.

All students will study the core subjects, which include Maths, English, Science, Core PE and PHSCE. These are the subjects seen as being essential at this stage of their education. Students will then be offered a range of optional subjects that will be tailored to their profile and allow them to select a programme that fits their interests and strengths. This ensures that students are able to access courses and achieve throughout their time with us.

Unfortunately, due to the current school closure, we will be unable to hold the usual Year 9 Options Evening for parents and students. However, we appreciate the need to provide the information, advice and guidance that is necessary for all students to make an informed choice of the subjects that will have Sixth Form progression at its heart. This will involve the following opportunities to access information and support.

**Preit Chahal** Principal

**Hugh Robinson** CEO

Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

T +44 (0)191 285 1000

E [admin@ga.newcastle.sch.uk](mailto:admin@ga.newcastle.sch.uk) W [www.gosforthacademy.org.uk](http://www.gosforthacademy.org.uk)

### **Year 9 Virtual Option Evening (not live) – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

This will signal the launch of the process and will allow students and parents to understand the process and see the subject options that have been offered based on their study of them this year, their KS2 prior attainment and other national data which indicates how a student with a similar profile has gone on to perform. Students will also gain access to their personalised Year 9 Options Process Frog page (see below).

### **The Year 9 Options Process Frog Site – Available from 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and until early March**

This will become available to all students from 18<sup>th</sup> January and will remain open throughout the process. The site will provide students with a personalised bank of information relating to the courses offered to them. It has been constructed to allow departments to provide advice on the courses they offer, hoping to enthuse and inspire students to study each subject. This will be particularly important where students are considering subjects they have yet to study, such as Business or Childcare or where they would like to make a choice between two subjects they have already studied such as History and Geography.

The Options Form will also be available here and will be submitted via Frog as well.

### **Departmental Contact Facility - Available from 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and until 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021**

The Year 9 Options Process Frog page also includes a contact function (on the subject pages) that will allow parents and students to ask questions about the subjects they have been offered, throughout the launch week. This contact will be with the subject leads who will be best placed to answer questions on the courses/qualifications. They will work to reply to all queries as soon as possible, usually by e-mail.

### **Curriculum Offer Contact Facility - Available from 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and until 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

Parents wishing to gain further clarification on the curriculum offer made available to their child, will have the opportunity to arrange a meeting with a member of the senior team. Appointments and timescales are finite, and appointments must be made through the 'Contact us' section of the Year 9 Options Process Frog page by Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Alternatively parents can contact the school directly over the telephone to arrange an appointment. Please trust that the vast majority of students will have the best offer to enable Sixth Form progression. We would be grateful if parents make an appointment, only if necessary, and once they have been through all the resources.

### **Which Way Now Booklet and Parental Guide – Available from 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

The Year 9 Option Process Frog site has a 'Which Way Now?' booklet that takes students and parents through the important factors to consider. This is accompanied by a narrated PowerPoint and the Parent Guide (included as part of the booklet on Pages 14-17) with instructions for the tasks. Students can complete this booklet as they make their decisions and contact their form tutor for further advice.

### **Year 9 PHSCE Homework – Available from 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

All Year 9 students will receive a homework task with instructions to create an account and log in to KUDOS. This is an online resources that allows students to link choices made at this stage to future careers and vocations. For reference, there is also a web link on PHSCE section of the Options Site. Students will have continued access to KUDOS throughout their time with us, with Year 13 students able to access this as part of their Progression Tutorials.

## **Pastoral Options Contact – Before February Half Term**

All Year 9 students will also receive a phone call from the pastoral team where questions about their choices and the Options Process can be answered. It may be worth preparing any questions you have about the process in preparation for this.

Finally, at the time of writing this letter, we hope to see all Year 9 students return on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Further support and guidance will be offered at this stage if this is possible. Please remember that the pastoral team for Year 9, headed by Ms Alamo and Mr Shelmerdine and subject teachers that students currently have, are always available to contact if there is any uncertainty.

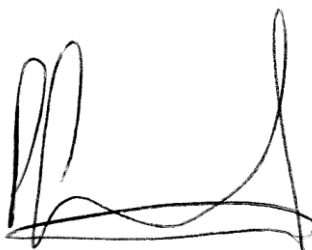
We would advise students and parents to avoid making rash decisions as part of this process. We have aimed to provide as much information as possible and hope that this will prove useful for all involved. Although for some, these decisions may prove to be straight-forward, for the majority, a proportionate amount of time should be dedicated to this important decision; this is not a first come, first served process. Once the Options Form has been submitted, students will not be able to change their choices. The final deadline has been set for Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> March for the final submission of these forms.

This is an exciting time for students as they embark on the next stage of their education and assume a degree of control over what they wish to study moving forward. I hope this remains at the forefront of their minds in these unusual circumstances.

Yours sincerely



**Preit Chahal**  
Principal



**Peter Snowdon**  
Senior Lead - Curriculum