



March 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

Year 8 Preferences Evening – Thursday 15 March 2018

Over the coming week's students from Year 8 will need to decide on their final preference choices for study in Years 9, 10 and 11. The School will offer full support for this process including: a Preferences Evening for parents and students on Thursday 15 March from 18:00 to 19:30, an interview for your child with a member of the Leadership Team (to be arranged following the Preferences Evening), and continued support from their tutor.

As you may be aware, there is currently a great deal of change in the Government education policy. In particular, there are tighter guidelines regarding the curriculum students are required to follow. The school has responded to these changes carefully and in order to ensure your child can maximise their progress and achievement, whilst also having the opportunity to choose subjects they are interested in. The Preferences process takes into account the importance of preparing students for their next phase of education - Post 16.

The information and guidance below is designed to assist you and your child when considering their Preferences choices. Students have been issued their Preferences Information Booklets and will receive their Subject Preferences Form from their tutor when the student is ready to complete it.

NB: All students in Years 9, 10 and 11 will follow a core offer of English Language GCSE, English Literature GCSE, Mathematics GCSE, Science (2 or 3 GCSE's), Core PE and PSHCE.

- All students will be required to choose **four preference subjects**. This will enable them to study their preference subjects in depth and maximise their achievement.
- Some students have been allocated the English Baccalaureate Pathway. This requires students to take subjects that qualify them for the EBACC. Students must take Geography or History and then either Spanish, French or Italian alongside a further **two options**. These students have been identified based on their attainment on entry to the school, their attainment in the Cognitive Ability Tests and current levels of progress. For those students allocated this pathway it is indicated clearly at the top of their Preferences Form.
- All other students can pick freely from the four option blocks including the combination of subjects that would also qualify for the EBACC route.

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- Please note that Computing and Languages are only recommended if the student has both an aptitude and interest in the subject.
- It is not possible to take Technology and Design Technology Textiles as they are now one qualification specialising in different material areas.

Further information and guidance can be found in the 'Information for Parents' Booklet' that is also on the School website. If you should need further support please feel free to contact Mrs S. Bone – Acting Head of Year 8 via reception or hoy8@thehambleschool.co.uk

As well as changes to the curriculum, the Government are also introducing changes to GCSE and BTEC examination specifications and to the way examinations are graded. I have outlined some of these key changes with an extract from the 'Information for Parents' below:

The complexity of the new GCSE courses is being developed and they have greater content than before. In the majority of subjects students will be assessed through a final examination rather than controlled assessment. Examinations have also been introduced to the BTEC courses; to gain a Level 2 qualification these exams must be passed. The reformed GCSE examinations will be graded using a 1-9 scale (1 the lowest, 9 highest) with no direct comparison between the old (A - G).*

I hope this letter has been helpful in clarifying the Preferences process. We look forward to working with you to ensure your child achieves their maximum potential and enjoys their studies.

Yours sincerely



Lisa Croke
Headteacher



Chris Pranker
Deputy Headteacher

If, at any time, you should require special arrangements to be made when visiting the school and/or in order to participate fully in supporting your child at school (e.g. an accessible venue for meetings, if you are a wheelchair user, assistance with translation of documents or enlarged copies of communications etc.), please do not hesitate to let us know.