

Friday 14 September 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

**RE: Year 8 Options process 2018/19**

At St. Julie's Catholic High school, your daughter has access to a broad and balanced curriculum relevant to her individual needs. In preparation for the Year 8 options process, I would like to outline the support your daughter will receive over the next few months in making some important decisions about her option choices.

In response to the new GCSE/A Level reforms and a full consultation with parents, governors and staff in 2015, your daughter will start her GCSE options from September 2019. This is in response to the increased rigour and content of GCSE qualifications. Through schemes of work and high quality learning and teaching there will be a key focus on developing your daughter's analytical, evaluative and decision-making skills as well as supporting her ability with higher level numeracy and literacy skills.

The large majority of your daughter's curriculum will be core qualifications which are compulsory (statutory) as well as three optional qualifications. Your daughter may be offered a maximum of three option choices, some students may be offered less but this will be discussed with individual students and parents. From Year 9, each option subject will be taught three times per week (maximum of 9 lessons per week).

**Year 8 Options timeline for 2018/19**

Information	Key dates	Person/s responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Year 8 Parents Evening</li></ul>	Thursday 17 January 2019	Mrs McCourt, Mrs Walls and Mrs Maguire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Letter of invitation to Year 8 Options - Parent/Carers</li></ul>	Monday 21 January 2019	Mrs McCourt, Mrs Walls and Mrs Maguire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Year 8 Options Evening</li><li>There will be one talk at 5pm followed by the Marketplace</li><li>Year 8 Option forms to be given out in the Year 8 Information pack</li></ul>	Thursday 7 March 2019	All teaching staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Year 8 Interviews begin for selected pupils</li></ul>	Friday 8 March 2019 – ongoing	Mrs Walls and Mrs Maguire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Deadline for Year 8 Option forms</li></ul>	Friday 22 March 2019	All forms to Mrs Walls
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Confirmed options sent home to Parent/Carers</li></ul>	April 2019	Mrs Walls

From October 2018 your daughter will have access to St. Julie's Careers Services. Scheduled interviews will take place from November 2018 and your daughter will receive an appointment card from Mrs Mannings (Careers Advisor). Workshops, assemblies and high quality information and guidance via PSHE lessons will be provided throughout the year, to ensure your daughter makes an informed decision about her options. As a starting point your daughter will complete an online survey about her options. This survey will take place during her PSHE lesson.

The large majority of subjects offered at GCSE level are academic qualifications. Students achieving a key stage 2 scaled score of 106 or above will continue with modern foreign languages as a compulsory subject and they may also be advised to study History and/or Geography. Students achieving below this score will have the option to continue with modern foreign languages.

Many universities ask for a specific number of GCSEs at specific grades. Furthermore, a number of medical courses ask for five A\* (sometimes more), this will change in line with the new 9-1 numerical grading system. Currently University College London (UCL), one of the Russell Group universities, requires a Modern Foreign Language GCSE at grade 5/6 or above for all of its programmes. **Modern Foreign Language qualifications are valued by admissions tutors across the Russell Group universities** and especially for competitive entry courses across the University sector. Studying a Modern Foreign Language will give your daughter a competitive advantage in her future choices.

Information regarding curriculum content and the new assessment reforms are available on the school website [www.stjulies.org.uk](http://www.stjulies.org.uk). This also includes information about the 9-1 GCSE numerical grading system and target setting for Years 7 to 11.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about the options process please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Walls [jwalls@stjulies.org.uk](mailto:jwalls@stjulies.org.uk) or Mrs Maguire [cmaguire@stjulies.org.uk](mailto:cmaguire@stjulies.org.uk). Thank you for your continued support of your daughter's education.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs K McCourt

Deputy Head teacher for KS3/4