

WS/RNM/YR9 OPTIONS LET

3rd January 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

This is an exciting time for our Year 9 students as they begin to consider their options for GCSE. Our options evening is on the 18th January when you will have a chance to speak to your child's teachers as well as listen to a presentation about the options choices we offer. I will be in touch shortly about arrangements for this event.

Following recent changes to GCSE grades and specifications we are conducting a curriculum review in order to ensure we deliver the best possible coverage of the skills, knowledge and understanding your child needs to succeed in these new courses. I would like to take this opportunity to share our proposals with you and give you chance to comment or ask questions before we finalise any arrangements.

The new courses are challenging and are more content heavy than ever before and we need a curriculum model that allows students to develop as learners to meet the new challenges without losing any of the enjoyment and enrichment that should come from studying subjects they have chosen as options. We are considering replacing the triple sciences option with the new Trilogy qualification which is equally demanding and content heavy as the old separate sciences (triple) option. All new specifications are considerably more content heavy and present significant challenge. The trilogy course is comprehensive - covering all three sciences in real depth and is academically rigorous. It is considerably more content heavy than the old double science qualification. At present our intention is to enter all for the science trilogy qualification instead of triple; this is increasingly the practice at many schools, including some of the most successful schools in the Leeds area. It leads to two GCSEs, but like all new GCSE qualifications they cover more content than ever before. It is taught by specialists in each subject prepares students well for Physics, Chemistry and Biology A Levels and beyond.

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In terms of university admissions requirements the Trilogy qualification is highly regarded and accepted for courses such as medicine and dentistry as well as other science degrees. Our aim is to provide as broad and balanced a curriculum as possible and the proposal to enter students for the Trilogy allows us to retain the strong academic rigour of the single sciences whilst ensuring breadth and balance across the curriculum.

Any significant curriculum changes like these proposals cannot be made lightly and we have spent a considerable amount of time weighing the different models and deciding on what best meets the needs of our own students. Your views are important and should you have any comments or questions please get in touch with me at school by email at westermang@bostonspa.leeds.sch.uk (please put Year 9 options in the subject) or if you would prefer you can leave letters or queries addressed to me at reception or post to me at Boston Spa Academy, Clifford Moor Road, Boston Spa, LS23 6RW. I also look forward to being able to present our new curriculum model to you at the Year 9 Options Evening on Thursday 18th January 2018.

Yours faithfully



GEORGIA WESTERMAN
Vice Principal