



December 2023

Dear Parent / Carer,

We are writing to update you on the options and guidance process that our current year 9 students are following as they make important individual learning pathways decisions over the coming months. If you have not yet viewed the year 9 options launch presentations, they can be found at the following location on the school website:

<https://www.whitchurchhs.wales/Curriculum/Y10and11SubjectInformation/>

The following timeline provides an overview of the process:

- COMPLETION OF ILPP: September 2023 to June 2024
- YEAR 9 OPTIONS LAUNCH: Week beginning 20th November 2023
- UPDATED OPTION SUBJECT INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE: December 2023
- KEY STAGE 4 SUBJECT OPTION TALKS IN LESSONS AND ASSEMBLY: December 2023 onwards
- KEY STAGE 4 OPTIONS OPEN EVENING: 25th January 2024
- FREE CHOICE SURVEY: 29th January – 9th February 2024 – the decisions made by pupils at this stage are used to help formulate the Key Stage 4 option grid.
- OPTION GRID AVAILABLE: 26th February 2024
- INDIVIDUAL PUPIL INTERVIEWS: 27th, 28th and 29th February 2024
- OPTION FORMS SUBMITTED: 11th March 2024

All students are in the process of working through their digital Individual Learning Pathway Plans (ILPPs) on Microsoft TEAMS in their wellbeing sessions. These plans will guide students through the options and guidance process and will support them with learning pathway decisions. They will also encourage students to consider careers that interest them and direct them to places where they can find out more. An outline of what is covered in the ILPP can be found on the school website by following the link below.

<https://www.whitchurchhs.wales/Curriculum/CWRE/>

Teachers have also been discussing the specific content of key stage 4 courses during lessons to help support students with their decisions. Subject specific information is also available on the school website at the following location:

<https://www.whitchurchhs.wales/Curriculum/Y10and11SubjectInformation/Option/index.html>

Further information will be shared in the key stage 4 open evening from 5pm to 7pm on the 25th January 2024. This will be held on the upper school site and is a great opportunity for students to find out more about subjects that they are interested in following at key stage 4.

Armed with this information students should be in a position to make their free choice decisions between the 29th January and the 9th February 2024. This is an online survey that all year 9 students need to complete, selecting the three courses they want to follow at Whitchurch in year 10. Students will need to log these choices using Applica portal on our website. Written instructions will be shared through wellbeing sessions on how to apply. More information can be found on our website at the following link:



<https://www.whitchurchhs.wales/Curriculum/Y10and11SubjectInformation/Documents/OptionsProgramme/Y9OptionsInformation.mp4>

Although the decisions made in the free choice survey are not final, it is important that they are as accurate as possible, as the totals and priorities of student choices will be used to formulate the final option grid. This ensures that the final option grid provides the highest possible match to student choices to ensure that as many students as possible can follow the courses they have selected in year 10.

You will also notice from the timeline on the previous page that the support and guidance does not stop there. Students will also receive a one to one interview with a senior member of staff to help discuss option choices and individual learning pathways. Careers Wales advisors will also be available on the interview days to support.

Whilst students will be able to change their mind following the free choice survey and after their option choices are submitted, it is important that the decisions that they make over the coming months are as informed and as accurate as possible to avoid disappointment with courses becoming full. With this in mind, we would encourage you to discuss these decisions with your child over the Christmas period and beyond.

Can we take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support and wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us on 02920 629700

Yours sincerely

Caroline Robson
Assistant Headteacher KS2-3

David O'Rourke
Year 9 Progress Leader

Cerys Beynon
Year 9 pastoral assistant

Dan Duncan
Key Stage 3 Pastoral support and Transition co-ordinator

Neil Potter
Year 9 Assistant Progress Leader

Jonathan Davies
Assistant Headteacher Curriculum