

13 February 2026

**Headteacher - Ms N Sheppard**

Dear Parents and Carers

As you are aware, Year 9 students complete their Key Stage 3 courses in July and move on to Key Stage 4 courses in September of Year 10. The Key Stage 4 options process has now begun.

Your child will soon be making important decisions about their option choices for Key Stage 4. These choices can feel significant, and we would like to offer some guidance on how you can best support your child during this process.

When considering option subjects it is important to look beyond what a student enjoys or what they believe they “should” choose and instead think carefully about how they learn best. Students have different learning styles and understanding this can help them make choices that lead to greater confidence, engagement and success.

Broadly option subjects can fall into two pathways:

#### **Academic subjects**

These tend to be more theory-based with a strong focus on examinations, written work, independent study and abstract thinking. These subjects suit students who enjoy learning through reading, writing, discussion and revision.

#### **Vocational subjects**

These are often more practical and coursework-based. They focus on developing applied skills, problem solving and learning through doing. Vocational subjects can be particularly well suited to students who thrive in hands-on environments prefer continuous assessment or enjoy seeing clear real world outcomes from their learning.

Neither pathway is “better” than the other. Both can lead to further education, training and a wide range of career opportunities. The key is finding the right balance for each individual student based on their strengths, interests and learning style.

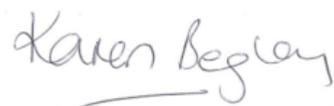
To support meaningful conversations at home [please use this link](#) to information about the subjects on offer and the following link to the [Indication of Choices Form](#). We ask that you complete this form together with your child by Monday 23 February. This will help students reflect on their preferences in advance and allow families to arrive at the Options Evening with questions and a clearer sense of direction.

Our Options Evening will take place on Thursday 5 March 2026 from 5.00 pm to 7.00 pm with a presentation in the main hall at 5.30 pm. It is very important that both you and your child attend this evening as it is an opportunity to speak to staff about the options available

After half term students will attend assemblies designed to help them better understand the new courses available to them. In lessons their teachers have been talking through the differences between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 helping students to understand what to expect as they move into the next stage of their learning in each subject.

This is an exciting stage in your child's educational journey and we look forward to supporting both you and them as they plan for their future goals and aspirations.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Begley". The signature is written in a light grey or blue ink and is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

Miss Begley  
Deputy Headteacher