



Headteacher: Mrs Sue Pryor MA NPQH

8th November 2021

Re: The Options Process

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to introduce you to the options process and outline the key events that will take place to support you and your daughter. I appreciate that some of you may have been through this process before and, whilst the overall process is similar, there may also be some differences so please do look through the following carefully.

Pathways:

We offer two pathways:

- Pathway one – Humanities: Pupils select either geography or history and no longer continue with a language.
- Pathway two – Languages: Pupils continue with the language they are currently learning. They have the opportunity to take either geography or history to achieve the Ebacc qualification.

We take great care to place each pupil on the pathway which will enable them to achieve to their full potential. Pupils will be aware of their pathway by the end of this term. **ALL pupils**, regardless of pathway, have an **additional two option preferences** to make, one from each option block.

Support:

Pupils will have information assemblies with me to explain the options process, along with a number of form time activities that will generate discussion and provide support. I will deliver an introductory assembly to Year 8 on Monday 29th November in the main Hall and will also put the powerpoint in the Year 8 Google Classroom. I will also be available every lunchtime on Tuesday to Friday in my office from 12.50pm to talk to any pupils who would like help throughout the option process. Parents/carers will be able to book Zoom appointments with me for Year 8 Parents Evening on Monday 13th January if you would like to discuss options.

Subject information:

Course descriptions for all option subjects will be given to pupils on 1st December. Pupils will then have the weekend to read these in detail. On Monday 6th December pupils will then have the chance to sign up for January taster lessons in subjects they may be considering but do not currently study and would like to know more about.

Options and careers focus weeks:

As soon as we return in January we will have a two week focus on options and careers from Tuesday 4th January to Friday 14th January. All key stage 3 subjects will run a GCSE taster lesson and a careers lesson as part of the timetable. Taster lessons in new subjects will also occur during these two weeks and will all be held in the canteen.

Furthermore, all Year 8 pupils are offered an Options Interview with Mr Williams (our school Careers Advisor) to support their choices, in addition to the guidance given throughout all of the above events.

We fully appreciate that this process can be very daunting and I hope that this letter has provided a clear overview of the steps involved and support offered. On the reverse of this letter you will find a summary of all of the key dates mentioned above and also FAQs – please take time to look through this and discuss it with your daughter. Information will also be posted regularly in the Year 8 Google Classroom, parent texts and emails will be sent and information will also be available on our website at: <https://swakeleys.hillingdon.sch.uk/curriculum>.

Yours sincerely,

C. Devereux (Mrs)

Deputy Headteacher: Achievement and Curriculum



Options Pathways

HUMANITIES pathway:

Approx. 40 pupils



- No MFL
- Must choose either Geography or History (a Humanity)
- 2 other choices

LANGUAGES pathway:

Approx. 200 pupils



- With MFL
- 2 other choices
- Can choose either Geography or History to achieve Ebacc (but not compulsory)

Options – Common questions...and the answers!

1. Does my pathway affect the set I am in for English, maths or science?
NO - core subject sets all set separately and this is not part of the options process
2. Why do we not do triple science?
Triple science adds too much pressure with an extra three exams and you do not need it for 6th Form
3. If I am on the Languages pathway, do I have to do history or geography?
NO, but you can choose either as an option. If you do then you have the Ebacc subjects.
4. What is Ebacc?
It is an academic set of 5 subjects Eng, maths, science, MFL and a humanity. Achieve a grade 4 or 5 in all to achieve Ebacc.
5. Some courses are not available on the Humanities pathway – why?
These subjects require you to be really good at English, Maths and/or science
6. What is the deadline for option forms and when will we know which courses we have?
The deadline for handing in options forms is Tuesday 8th February and choices will be confirmed in May
7. Why do we need to pick back up subjects?
Unfortunately you may NOT get your top two choices – we sometimes have to use back-ups if courses are full or not running so pick these carefully too!

Date/timing	Actions
By 12th November	Identify pupils for Humanities pathway Update course descriptions Introductory letter home to all parents (week comm. 8 th Nov)
By 15th November	Meet with Hums pupils, additional letter home for these
Mon 29th Nov Wed 1st Dec	Introductory assembly to Y8 in main Hall with Mrs Devereux Issue all <u>OPTION</u> course descriptions (Options Book) to pupils
Monday 6th December (the form will stay open until the end of Tuesday)	Pupils complete form indicating any taster lessons they would like to sign up for (max. of 3 each). Y8 do this as form activity.
Tuesday 4th – Friday 7th Jan	Two weeks: taster lessons in KS3 options subjects, careers lesson (PSHCE) and drop down taster lessons for new subjects in the canteen
Monday 17th January	'Dry run' of option choices
Friday 28th January	Issue options forms – <u>includes subject option blocks</u>
Tuesday 8th February	Deadline for handing in options forms