



24 May 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to inform you of the decisions made by the Academy to make changes to our current Options selection process in school. This decision has been made, partly as a result of the current pandemic and the effect this has had on the provision of education in school, and also because we feel it is the right time to do so.

We have made the decision to extend the KS3 curriculum to the end of Year 9 for all subjects with immediate effect. This means that your child will not choose any Options to begin at the start of Year 9. Instead, they will be provided with an opportunity to broaden their understanding of the national curriculum at Key Stage 3, allowing them to develop the deeper understanding they now require to be successful in GCSE and Vocational qualifications throughout Years 10 and 11. All Options will now be chosen in Year 9 and then commence at the beginning of Year 10 with assessments taking place at the end of Year 11.

Students will still be able to choose from the extensive suite of qualifications we have on offer and will not be disadvantaged in any way. In fact, contrary to being disadvantaged, students will now be able to gain a greater understanding of each of the subjects we have on offer and, through our rigorous in school careers provision, they will have opportunities to more closely look at what they may like to do 'Post 16' and to choose options that will support them to reach those destinations.

In addition to this, throughout Year 9, we will be offering our students exciting opportunities to gain qualifications and experiences through our KS3 Exceed Programme. Students will have the opportunity to gain the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award, a Sports Leader Award, the IDEA Award. They will also take part in a range of other programmes, which will provide students with opportunities to develop their character, skills and attributes to ensure that they are well rounded young people who can stand out from the crowd at future interviews for colleges, universities and with employers. Students will be able to use these certifications as part of their application process to colleges, apprenticeships and, eventually, university and employment, alongside the academic qualifications they achieve.

A date for your diary is **Thursday 1 July 2021**, which is our **Year 8 Parents' Evening**; this will be an excellent opportunity to discuss the progress your child is making. More information on how to arrange appointments for the evening will be sent to you in due course. In the meantime, if you have any questions about this or the Options process, please do not hesitate to contact me in school by emailing diane.whitehead@appletonacademy.co.uk.

Yours faithfully

Diane Whitehead
Deputy Headteacher – Secondary Attainment and Standards