



2 February 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to inform you of the important process that you and your child will soon be embarking on to personalise their curriculum choices and pick the subjects that they would like to take at GCSE/BTEC Level alongside the core ones. Over the last few years at NES, students have decided on their 'option' subjects at the end of Year 8. We have made some changes this year, which I have outlined below.

Your child will continue to study all subjects into Year 9, but they will choose an EBACC subject (History, Geography or Spanish/French) at the end of Year 8 that will have extra curriculum time and which they will take through to GCSE. They will continue to study the other EBACC subjects as well but they will have less curriculum time in Year 9. If your child chooses to study Spanish for their EBACC option, there will still be the opportunity to take both Geography and History in Years 10 and 11 if they wish to.

The latest educational research clearly demonstrates the benefits of giving students a broader curriculum for as long as possible before specialising for GCSEs/BTECs. The topics and concepts studied at GCSE can be challenging and require a large body of knowledge and skills which then allow students to learn successfully. By giving students more time to develop their knowledge and skills at Key Stage 3, we are confident that they will be better equipped to learn the more complex knowledge needed for Key Stage 4.

Your child will choose two further option subjects at the end of Year 9 to study through to GCSE/BTEC level at the end of Year 11.

On **Tuesday 1st March** we are holding an options evening for our Year 8 pupils and their parents/guardians. I will outline our new plans and there will be the opportunity for students and parents to talk with staff from the Geography, History and Language departments to support them to make their EBACC option choice, which they will study in Year 9. The presentation will take place at **5pm** in the main hall and be repeated at **5.45pm**. We will then of course hold a further options evening in Year 9 when there are further choices to be made.

We look forward to welcoming you to school at on Tuesday 1st March to discuss the process in more detail.

Yours faithfully

Mr J Wright
Assistant Principal for Curriculum