



ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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23rd April 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Year 9 Options Process

Plans are well advanced with regards to the process by which students decide which subjects they will be continuing to study when they move into Year 10 in September 2021.

I am delighted to share with you some key dates for events that make up the options process. What follows will give you further information about the curriculum that students will have access to in September and also the activities that will give students and parents' information to make the right curriculum choices for them.

Year 10 Curriculum for September 2021

- All students will study the compulsory core curriculum of Maths, English and Science.
- Students will all complete programmes of study in the compulsory subjects of RE and Core PE.
- For the compulsory science part of the curriculum, students will be guided to study either Combined or Separate Science GCSEs.
- Students then have a range of options to choose to fill **four** option blocks on their timetable.
- To ensure that students are not being disadvantaged by not opting for a broad range of subjects including a facilitating subject. All students are expected to have chosen an **humanities** (Geography or History) and a **Language** (French or Spanish).
- The remaining two options can be selected from a wide range of subjects and types of qualification, including both GCSE, BTEC and Technical Award qualifications.

We strongly believe that education is not a 'one size fits all' system. We believe that all students need a broad and balanced curriculum to give them a mix of academic, creative, practical and social skills to fit them for life in the fast-moving world of the 21st century.

Our aim is such that each student will be able to follow a timetable which is both broad and balanced both in terms of the range of subjects they study but also with regard to the learning style involved.

During the process of allocation of options choices please understand that while we will do our utmost to enable your son/daughter to follow their preferred personalised learning plan it may not, in a small number of cases, be possible e.g. if a course is vastly oversubscribed or only a very small number of students choose a course.

Between 5th May 2021 and the 18th June 2021 there will be a programme of support and guidance for Year 9 to help them make their options choices.

- Week beginning 10th May, an STM Y10 Curriculum Guide will be posted home to all Year 9 students. Included with this will be a copy of the Options Form which will need to be completed and returned to school by 28th May – this can either be returned as a hard copy or completed through google form online link.

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- On Tuesday, 11th May a document will be provided containing links to a video presentation explaining how the options process works, the difference between GCSE and vocational qualifications, and advice on how to make good choices will also be made available at this time.
- Throughout the month of May, if students and parents/carers have any questions about options subjects these can be emailed to the email address "options@stthomasmoreschool.org.uk" – we will aim to answer any queries you might have that will help you to make the best subject choices for our students.
- During lessons Year 9 teachers will also explain how the subjects they are currently studying form the foundation of courses in Year 10 and will give time for students to ask questions and see examples of students work.
- On the 6th and 7th of May Subject Leaders for subjects not currently been studied in Year 9 (e.g. Business, Media Studies, Psychology, Health and Social Care and Sociology) will deliver a short presentation about their subject and students will have the opportunity to ask questions.
- Following all of these activities, students will then be asked to complete their options choice form. All options forms will need to be completed and either handed in to their form tutors or completed via the online google form by the **Options Deadline** on **Friday 28th May 2021**.

In the week begin 14th June, all students will be given an appointment during school hours to discuss and finalised their option choices with a member of SLT, parents are encouraged to attend the meeting if possible.

I would like to thank you in advance for your support in ensuring our Year 9 students make informed curriculum choices.

Yours sincerely
Alex Rosen
Head of School