



23rd January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Changes to the Options Process

I am writing to inform you of a change to the curriculum for Year 7 and 8 at Ormiston Denes Academy. As a Principal I have always believed in a strong foundation that is based around the national curriculum as it provides the basis for a good rounded education that prepares students for their exams in Year 11 and just as importantly their life ahead.

For the past few years, students in Year 7 and 8 have followed a two year Key Stage 3 curriculum, where they have studied various subjects as humanities, MFL, art and technology, along with performance arts. Options were then started in Year 9 which is where some of their GCSE and BTEC programmes began. Recently there has been discussion about the length of Key Stage 3 with many schools reverting back to the traditional model of a three year course for Key Stage 3 (years 7, 8 and 9) with the Key Stage 4 qualifications being started in Year 10 and 11.

Ormiston Academies Trust does not direct its academies, however there would have to be a strong case – including outcomes in Year 11 – to justify our current structure staying the same. Ofsted are also very challenging of those academies which only have two years foundation saying it does not provide the breadth of education that students require.

Following discussions with middle leaders and the whole staff we are now busy preparing for the change which will come into operation in September 2020. This will mean that the process of choosing options will now only take place in Year 9, ready for starting the Key Stage 4 courses in Year 10 - although we do recognise that there will be various nuances to this. Further information regarding options will follow soon.

Yours faithfully

Jim Nixon
Principal

