

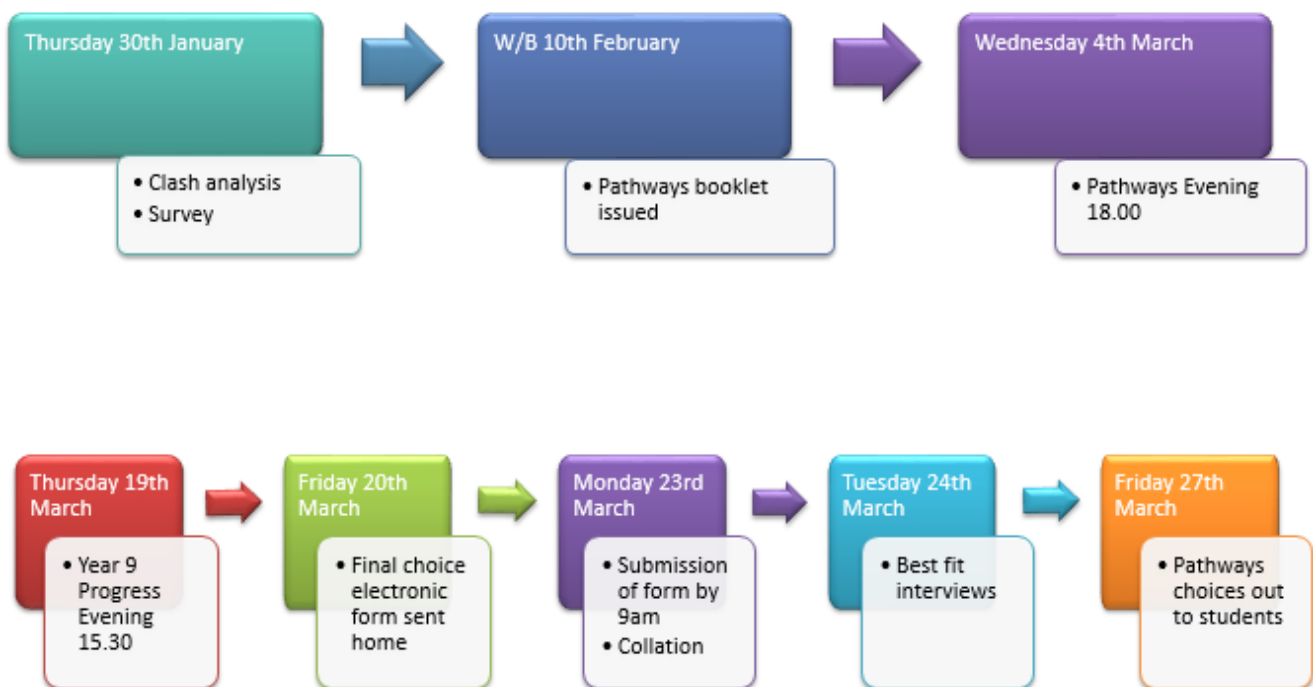
**Headteacher:** Mr J Parr BA Hons

14<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

The process by which your son/daughter chooses their GCSE options has started. We call this process 'Year 9 Pathways'. The flow chart below outlines some key dates. It is important to note that students **DO NOT** make their final choice until after the Year 9 Progress Evening in March 2020.

## Year 9 Pathways Process 2020



At the start of the process we ask students which 4 subjects they would choose given a free choice. This helps us to understand the preferred range of subjects. Students will also study for GCSEs in English, Maths and Science; these are compulsory GCSEs. They will also have lessons in PSHE, Faith Philosophy & Ethics and Games: none of these subjects are examined, but they are also compulsory.

Students choose 4 additional subjects to study at GCSE or equivalent. We aim to produce 4 option blocks and students select their first and second choice from each block of subjects. Which subjects to put in which blocks is the difficult part. Ideally everyone would get their first or second choice in each block, with the majority getting their first choices. The logistics of this are quite complex. To prepare the way for building the option blocks we will asked students a

series of questions about pairs of subjects and which subject they would choose, if any. This is called the 'Clash Analysis'. This exercise took place at the end of January and has allowed us to avoid putting popular subjects in the same option block. One outcome to note from the clash analysis was that too few students were interested in Spanish for that subject to appear in the option blocks this year. Please note that the remaining subjects that appear in the blocks will only run if sufficient students opt to do them.

The 'Pathways Booklet' has more detail about the subjects available and the compulsory subjects studied. An electronic copy of the booklet is available on the school website [here](#). Remember that students **DO NOT** make their choice until after the Year 9 Progress Evening in March 2020. A paper copy of the Pathways booklet has been issued today. At the Pathways Evening event you will get more information about the process, have the opportunity to ask questions and visit each subject area to find out more about the course.

After the Pathways Evening is Year 9 Progress Evening. This is an opportunity to find out about progress in subjects and suitability for the GCSE, or equivalent, courses on offer. Remember you can also check how well your son/daughter is doing on GO 4 Schools at any time. Year 9 exams for option subjects took place recently, so expect to see this data in GO 4 Schools.

Please do not be daunted by this process, we will guide your son/daughter through each and every step offering advice, guidance and support as required. We will write to you again before the various evening events detailed above. Do start conversations at home, talking about subjects and what they hope to gain by doing them is an important part of the process.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Wood  
Deputy Headteacher