

February 2021



Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: GCSE Options

Can I begin by saying 'well done' to all our students in Year 8 who have been doing amazingly well with their distance learning work. The journey for everyone is slightly different depending on personal circumstances, although the key attributes that shine through such as their organisation, resilience and confidence in independently completing work set are a credit to all.

We have received contact from a number of parents who are aware that in previous years students in year 8 would be completing their option choices at this time of year and are asking for clarification on what the school's plans are moving forwards.

We are obviously aware of the amount of time in school which has been lost for your child, although we also recognise that staff have worked hard to continue to deliver schemes of work that follow the normal curriculum as far as is possible. Clearly some areas of study cannot be completed in the normal way while at home, and despite our very best efforts, replicating exactly the experience of being in school cannot be achieved.

Taking this into account, we are currently considering several models which all have advantages, alongside some challenges, which we will need to respond to. In addition, although Monday, 8th March has been suggested as a possible return date for some students in all schools, we cannot guarantee this will be the case; the actual return date of year 8 students will also be a contributing factor in making final decisions.

In all cases students will be fully supported in any choices required through materials published online, opportunity to sample lessons and the chance for parents to meet with key subject staff. Depending on the situation at the time, this could be via face-to-face sessions in school or potentially via online TEAMS meetings. We are already planning for any 'catch-up work' which may be required and are keen to plan further enrichment activities to enhance provision for all students at the point that normality resumes.

We are aware that you and your child may have some questions but wanted to give reassurance that significant work is currently being undertaken to ensure that your child continues to make excellent progress through a broad, balanced and rich curriculum offer with our fundamental principles of ensuring that children ASPIRE, ENJOY and ACHIEVE remain at the forefront of our thinking.

If you do have any questions, please contact Mr Brown (bruce.brown@oldburywells.com) who co-ordinates our options process. We will be making further contact once final decisions have been made and we see how the remainder of this academic year will unfold.

Thank you as always for your support and understanding.

Yours faithfully

Mr Lee Tristham
Headteacher

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