



22 May 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Principal: Mrs S M Ward BA (Hons) AKE

We are pleased to announce that from September 2023, the curriculum at St Paul's Academy will be undergoing some exciting changes. In line with the majority of other schools across the country, and with guidance from the DFE (Department for Education) our Key Stage 3 will be moving from 2 years (Years 7- 8) to 3 years (Years 7- 9). The rationale for this is to make sure that pupils have the opportunity to study a broad range of subjects, at the very least in line with the national curriculum. We want all pupils to benefit from a good, well-taught curriculum.

The change will enable St Paul's Academy to create adequate time for the National Curriculum to be taught more fully so that students benefit from its reach and its experience, growing their love for subjects before Key Stage 4 qualifications begin. This foundation will actually strengthen their access to KS4 and put students in a better position to make their option choices with greater depth and experience. Year 9 will become the Options year and the details of the courses and the choices will be shared with your child and you as families in Autumn 2023. **Year 8 students have had this information shared with them in assembly this morning as they will be the first students to undergo this change.**

This change to the timing will avoid students making finite choices so early into their time at St Paul's or not having a chance to study a whole range of subjects, like art, music or languages ever again before they leave school. Educational research indicates that a curriculum narrowed too early can mean that children miss out on opportunities to study subjects and gain knowledge that could be valuable in later stages of education, or in their adult lives. In addition, the research shows this has a disproportionately negative effect on the most disadvantaged pupils. When students then move onto Key Stage 5 education, they will have to meet the demands of courses delivered in two years and this approach to KS4 will prepare them well for that too.

To support the requirements of the new Key Stage 4 (Years 10 -11), the timetable will be adjusted to support students. Key Stage 4 Option subjects will gain an extra lesson a week over the two-year course and there will also see increases in the lesson time available for Maths, English, Science and other core subjects. Curriculum changes will enable us to have double lessons for subjects where the practical lessons help students to achieve greater depth and enjoyment of their studies. We will enrich the Key Stage 3 curriculum with an extra lesson of English, Maths and Science which will ensure your child will have made the right amount of academic progress to start their new courses without compromising on the Arts, Sport, Humanities and all the other important aspects of your child's learning.

If you have any questions, please contact either myself or Mrs Callow at the following addresses:

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With best wishes,

Emily Tudor
Vice Principal

