



Blaise High School
Station Road
Henbury
Bristol
BS10 7QH

JHY/JBW
24 January 2025

Dear Blaise families,

I am very excited to be writing to you, in order to outline the upcoming Year 9 Options process in advance of our information evening on February 26th. This is a big moment for the children in Year 9, and we are delighted to embark on the next step of their journey with them. The way in which our options are designed means that any combination of subjects chosen will be a good combination, and any combination, along with excellent attendance, will support students to maximise their potential. English Language, English Literature, Combined Science, Maths, PE and PSHE are compulsory subjects. No combination is limiting, and any course can be studied at post 16 following any combination of our options.

Regarding subject choices, in summary, students in classes:

- B, L and A will have three choices. We are really excited to announce that French will be automatically taken by students in sets B, L and A. This will provide them with a great breadth to their curriculum and is possible as a result of the investments we have made in expanding our fantastic MFL team.
- I, S and E will have four choices. French will not be compulsory, however students are very welcome to select it and we hope that many do so.
- All students must choose at least one from French, Geography and History. They can select all three if they choose.

This is based on the aptitude shown over Key Stage 3 in French. No subject will be restricted though and any student will be able to opt to study French. We are ambitious for every child to study a language.

The reason for French, Geography and History having such priority is evidence based. Firstly, the English Baccalaureate refers to a group of options in which a child studies: English Language and Literature, Maths, Combined Science, Geography or History and a language. Research by The Sutton Trust from 300 schools found that statistically students following the English Baccalaureate subjects were:

- more likely to achieve good GCSEs in English and maths
- more likely to be taking an A level or other level 3 qualification after the age of 16
- less likely to have dropped out of education after the age of 16

The Department for Education say:

- *The EBacc is made up of the subjects which are considered essential to many degrees and open up lots of doors.*
- *A study by the UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects included in the EBacc provides students with greater opportunities in further education and increases the likelihood that a pupil will stay on in full-time education.*
- *Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can help improve a young person's performance in English and maths.*

Nat Nabarro, Headteacher

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Secondly, learning a language:

- supports students with their learning in all subjects as it develops analytical thinking, communication skills and attention to detail.
- Can increase job opportunities. A language GCSE is highly regarded by universities and prospective employers.

There will be much more information shared about the process and the individual subjects at our options evening. You will also have the opportunity to meet with most of the Heads of Subjects on 26 February. In addition, it would be great to see you all at our Y8/9 Academic Review Day on 13th February.

This will give you the chance to talk to all of your child's teachers about option choices for GCSE classes before coming to the options evening and before having to make any decisions. This event will run from 13:30 to 18:00.

We are confident that the children in Year 9 will achieve the best GCSE results the school has ever seen and we cannot wait to work with you in supporting them to get there. This is the next step in that journey.

We look forward to seeing you at both of these events, and please do not hesitate to ask for advice at either event.

Yours faithfully,



Jim Harvey
Deputy Headteacher

Nat Nabarro, Headteacher

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