



6 July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to inform you of an important change to your son/daughter's curriculum next year.

Lockdown and the closing of schools has meant that Year 10 students have lost several months teaching of their GCSE and BTEC courses in school. We do not yet know how the government will modify the usual exam arrangements to take account of the time lost.

We have decided to take the initiative and make some changes. We will provide Year 11 students with additional time to make up for missed learning time and to address any learning gaps in English and Maths in particular.

The tutor time programme is being replaced with the Aspire Programme. From 1.40 to 2.00, on Tuesday to Friday, Year 11 students will attend Aspire lessons which will focus on exam practise in English and Maths, taught by English and Maths teachers. On Mondays, Year 11 will have an assembly. We will use the assembly time to cover themes in common with the rest of the school but also to address particular Year 11 topics.

Your son/daughter will remain in their House but will no longer be in a vertical tutor group. Should you have any concerns about the progress of your son/daughter then their class teacher should be the first point of contact. If the concern is not related to one subject then the point of contact will be their House Leader.

We are proud of our inclusive and supportive ethos within school and are confident that our Year 11 students will continue to be able to access pastoral support from a number of different sources next year, as well as excellent academic provision. Year 11 will be able to speak with their new Aspire Leads should they need emotional support or advice around their own welfare, given that we have selected some of our most experienced staff to work with these groups. There are also trained members of staff who will be working exclusively with Year 11 to ensure that they are supported pastorally as well as academically.

We are introducing this change because we are determined to do all that we can to ensure that your son/daughter is as prepared as they can be for the next stage of their education after Whitstone, despite the disruption of the last few months.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Aspire Programme then please contact me via Epraise.

Yours sincerely,

Giles Atkins
Deputy Headteacher

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