

15 February 2019

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Options for year 8 students

We are delighted to announce that following an in depth consultation process, we have decided to take on board your valued feedback around considering the current process for students to choose which subjects they would like to continue studying to GCSE level. This has included consultation with parents, students, teachers and significant academic research into how best to support the needs and progress of all pupils. The current system until this year has been that students choose their options in year 8 and start their GCSE subjects in year 9.

The options process will now take place in year 9 for the following reasons:

- To allow more time for careers related education before students choose their options.
- There is clear feedback from parents that they would prefer this.
- Current educational research tells us that students studying a wide range of subjects as long as possible improves their life chances and fulfilment from education.
- National research shows us that students will continue to achieve the top results we have come to expect at St Mark's when undertaking GCSE courses in 2 year

We will communicate about the options process again when your child is in year 9. If you would like to speak to me directly about this, please email me at lhampton@stmarksacademy.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

Laurence Hampton

Vice Principal

Principal Lisa Peterkin