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Headteacher: Mrs Emma Anderson
Chair of Governors: Mr Steve Chew

Our ref: PT/RCY

26 January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to ensure you are fully aware of changes to the Options process this year, some as a result of an educational decision and others forced by the current situation regarding the pandemic.

As I am sure you are aware we had hoped to put on taster lessons for students just before Christmas but both COVID related staff and student absence put paid to that and the lockdown has prevented us from doing so this half term. We are very much dependent on Government decisions regarding the reopening of schools as to whether these will be able to take place or not but we will keep you informed. All the planning and timetables are done for this it will purely come down to when students are back in school but there is a good chance that we will, unfortunately, not be able to facilitate these this year.

With regards to the Options process we have had to make changes to the timings and events in order to maintain social distance protocols and support in the drive to reduce infection rates. Therefore, a video explaining the process in full will be released by myself on 8 February and the Options booklet detailing the process and courses available will go live on the website at the same time. I will then write to you again explaining the different pathways with the recommendations for your child.

One change this year is that Ethics will not be compulsory but will form part of the options. The reason behind this is to try to increase student choice and allow for 4 options. This comes from feedback that many students and parents felt that they would like more choice, particularly those wanting to pursue both Ebacc and the arts. This change will allow students to pursue these paths simultaneously, and to continue with their Ethics studies through an option if they so desire. Our dedicated Personal Development lesson also ensures that students will receive the ethical education that continues to develop their understanding of the world at large and prepares them to become active citizens in our ever changing world.

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As Parents evenings, SLT interviews and Options evenings cannot be conducted in person we will do these remotely through a mixture of options videos produced by all curriculum areas involved in the process and these will go live from 8 March and a virtual parents meetings with time for the SLT interviews on 4 and 5 March. In this way we can still have the personal contact needed and the opportunity for parents and students to see information regarding all the options on offer. The deadline for the Option forms, which again will be completed remotely where possible, is 17 March. It is essential that you are signed up to Edulink and check this regularly. Parents and SLT options meetings will be booked through this platform. If you are still having any issues with this then please contact Matt Loxley our data manager by email mloxley@newfield.sheffield.sch.uk or by phoning the school.

Rest assured that although this process has been heavily disrupted I am confident that the measures outlined above will ensure that students and parents are fully informed as to the choices on offer and that care and guidance are given at every step.

If you have any further questions then please do not hesitate to get in contact with me.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Thornely', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Thornely
Assistant Headteacher