



Ashton Community Science College

'a school to be proud of'

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Dear Parent/Carer and Students

Happy New Year! For many, a new year brings new opportunities, new challenges and in some cases new resolutions that see changes being made to improve things. I would like to take the opportunity in this letter to tell you about some of the changes and improvements we plan to make over the remainder of the academic year.

We intend to revert back to a 3 year Key Stage 3 and a 2 year Key Stage 4 with immediate effect. This will have an immediate impact on our current year 8, who will now no longer be choosing their options in February this year, but instead will continue following the national curriculum until the end of year 9.

They will make their option choices in February 2020, ready for their GCSE exams in June 2022. Please be reassured that this decision has been taken following careful consideration of the latest DfE and Ofsted research and will in no way disadvantage your child. Indeed, whilst the 3 year Key Stage 4 has served us well for many years when coursework was a dominant feature of the GCSE qualifications system, it serves us less well now there is a sharp focus on longer term retention and recall of information for what are predominantly terminal exams in almost all subject areas.

On Thursday 31st January we will be holding our year 8 parents evening from 4.00pm to 7.00pm and I hope parents of year 8 students are able to attend along with their child.

Year 11 mock exams commence week beginning 14th January for 2 weeks. We will release the results of those exams on 4th February in a results day style format during the afternoon. The purpose of this is to give our year 11 students an insight into what receiving their results envelope will be like in August, so that they can either build on the feelings of pride they experience when they open their envelope and see they have reached the targets they aimed for, or build on the disappointment (hopefully not too much of this emotion) to ensure that they enter all their exams as fully prepared as possible. This is an important time for year 11 because they really are on the home straight, with as little as 15 school weeks left until the exam season begins.

Throughout the Spring term, we will be offering students “master classes” aimed at those who are fully committed to reaching for the highest grades they can. These master classes are open and on offer to all students, but they will not be compulsory. What is compulsory is the completion of revision at home. We will ensure that all lessons capitalise on the learning opportunities during each hour of the school day, but it is crucial that students understand that what is done in the school day is only the beginning, and that they must put in significant amounts of revision work at home if they are to achieve the grades they deserve.



We will also be holding a year 11 parents information evening on Tuesday 5th February, which is the day after the mock results afternoon. I would like to invite all year 11 parents to attend and hope you will find the evening informative. It will run from 5.30 pm - 6.30 pm and will include offering parents a range of helpful tips to support your child through their GCSE's.

In September we introduced Accelerated Reader to all our year 7 classes and to some other key groups in school. I am pleased to tell you that this reading scheme is having the desired impact and many of our students have seen their reading age and fluency increase as a result of engaging with it. I would like to thank you for your support in this because I know that parents have encouraged regular reading.

Finally, I would like to ask for your support with home learning. Many of our students take time to complete home learning thoughtfully and to the best of their ability, but a small number do not. They either rush their homework and complete it to an unacceptable standard or worse, don't do it at all. A SMHW (Show My Homework) log in is available to all parents, either as an APP on a mobile phone or a tablet or as a web based platform via the school website and I would be most grateful if you could monitor the standard and quality of homework your child is completing. If you have any difficulties logging into SMHW, please don't hesitate to contact school, we will be happy to assist.

I have absolutely no doubt that working in partnership with parents and students is crucial to their success and I would like to thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Asquith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Miss S Asquith
Headteacher