



*Incorporating
King James's
Grammar School
Founded 1616*

King James's School

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Headteacher
Deputy Head
Deputy Head
Deputy Head
Chair of Governors

Mr C A Sugden
Mr J A W Walker
Mr I W Simpson
Mr S J Tighe
Mr D B James

January 2009

Dear Parents,

I am writing to inform you about some changes that we are making to our curriculum which will be phased in over the next two years.

The changes have been prompted by a number of factors. Firstly the announcement by the government, last Autumn, that Key Stage Three tests would be scrapped. Secondly, our belief that we can personalise our offer to better suit individual students. Thirdly, the need to deliver new courses (including the new 'Diploma') from September 2009.

We aim to put in place a new curriculum which will offer the following benefits:

- It will allow all students more choice of subjects at GCSE.
- It will allow all students to start GCSE's early; a number of GCSE's will now be started in Year 9, rather than in Year 10 as traditionally.
- It will allow some students an opportunity to stretch and challenge themselves by taking 'A' level and enrichment courses before the Sixth Form.
- The new curriculum will ensure that students who need extra help and extra time to achieve GCSE's in maths, English and science will get the time and support that they need. It will allow some students to take fewer GCSE's if that suits them, and some to take more if they are able.
- The new curriculum will also ensure that students have a good range of qualifications by the end of year 10, so that Year 11 can be spent on enrichment, preparation for 'A' level, or simply catching up and ensuring good passes in the core subjects.

Part of our plan will include, from 2010, mixed age teaching where the range of GCSE's available to study is greater, but Year 10 and Year 11 students will study together. Some GCSE's will be completed in one year and students can go on to choose new options for the final year.

The current Year 8 and Year 9 will be offered a different curriculum to that available previously. Year 8 students, for example, will be asked to choose their technology GCSE so that they can get started with this in Year 9. Science and maths GCSE's will also start early, and English will start building the core skills needed for GCSE during Year 9. Year 9 will be offered a rich range of options for next year, along with a chance to progress at a pace suitable to their ability.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Our plans have gone through a thorough consultation process with governors and curriculum leaders. There is very strong support to make these changes to ensure that King James's School prepares our youngsters effectively for life beyond school.

One impact of the new curriculum is that our academic year will need to run from June to June rather than September to September. July has often been a 'dead time' in schools and we intend to make full use of this time for teaching and learning.

Even though we will start teaching our new courses in June please be assured that holiday dates will not change, and there is no need for students to change their uniform until September, as usual. Of course, Year 7 will join us and start their academic year as usual in September.

I will keep you informed of our changes and how they may impact on the students. If you have any immediate questions or queries then please contact the school through admin@king-james.sch.uk or alternatively look at the Frequently Asked Questions link on our website.

In addition we will be holding an information evening for parents on 11th February at 6.30pm in the main school hall. If you would like to attend then please return the slip below (there is also an opportunity to submit a question in advance).

Yours sincerely

Carl Sugden
Headteacher

Please note the remaining training days for this academic year:

Friday 24th April 2009
Friday 12th June 2009
Wednesday 24th June 2009

Please return the tear off slip below via your son/daughter by 10th February. Slips should be handed to Form Tutors.

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I/we would like to attend the Information Evening on 11th February. No of places

Signed Name of son/daughter

The question I/we would like to submit is

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