

Dear Parent / Carer

05 October 2015

Changes to qualifications and the curriculum

In 2013 the then Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, set out the government's vision for reforming GCSE, AS and A level qualifications. He called for GCSEs to be made more challenging so pupils are better prepared for academic or vocational study, or for work and said that the primary function of A levels should be to prepare students for university education. In addition to these changes a new national curriculum has been introduced at key stage 3, and this is no longer linked to national curriculum levels.

Consequently, your child is attending secondary school during a period of immense change, and I wanted to take this opportunity to provide you with a brief overview of the key changes to qualifications and the curriculum that may affect them. Enclosed, you will find a summary of the key reforms to GCSE and A Level, with a link to further details.

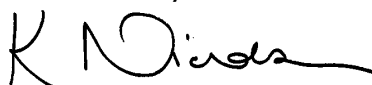
Moving forward, students at Key Stage 3 will no longer be awarded levels, GCSEs will be reformed and graded 1-9, and reformed A Levels will be taken at the end of Year 13 and assess all of the content covered across the key stage. These changes are being implemented in a staggered fashion and consequently each year group will be affected differently. The table below summarises the key impact for each of the current year groups at Lawnswood School.

Current Year Group	New KS3 Assessing without Levels	Levelled KS3, but taught new curriculum	New GCSEs in Business, DT, Media (Grades 1-9)	New GCSEs in Art, Drama, Science, History, Geography, PE, EPR, Music, MFL, Food (Grades 1-9)	New GCSEs in English & Maths (Grades 1-9)	Take a mix of old and new GCSEs	All old GCSEs
7	✓		✓	✓	✓		
8	✓		✓	✓	✓		
9		✓		✓	✓	✓	
10					✓	✓	
11							✓

Year 12 students are now being taught a mix of old and new A Level courses. New A Levels are currently being delivered for Art and Design, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics, English Language, English Literature, History, Physics, Psychology, Sociology. Year 13 continue with the old style A Levels.

We will endeavour to keep you informed of the details regarding these changes as your child moves through the school, however, if you do have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Ms K Nicholson
Deputy Headteacher