

Dear Parent/Carer

REF: Changes to GCSE Health and Social Care Course

I am writing to inform you of our planned proposal to change the current GCSE Health and Social Care course, of which your son/daughter is currently on, from a GCSE to a Level 2 BTEC.

The reason for this is that Edexcel are no longer planning on running the course as of next year and we feel your son/daughter stands a much stronger chance of achieving a higher grade following the BTEC course. What this means in reality is there is a small change in the assessment procedure between the two courses and the qualification will ultimately be different although carries the same equivalent GCSE value. For instance, a Merit at Level 2 equates to a B at GCSE.

The change in assessment really focuses on the assignment structure; on the BTEC course your son/daughter will need to submit 3 pieces of coursework instead of the 1 substantially larger piece on the GCSE; as with the GCSE these will be marked by the teachers and may be asked to be part of a sample to be validated by Edexcel externally. There will also be one exam; we anticipate that this will be sat at the end of year 10 and re-sat if necessary in January of year 11. This will hopefully remove some of the pressure from your son/daughter in the run up to her GCSEs.

The BTEC also provides your son/daughter with excellent links to Level 3 study moving onto to study the Level 3 BTEC Health and Social Care at Eckington 6th Form Centre for example. By the end of the course we are confident that your son/daughter will be able to go on to work in any health and social care profession and/or go on to study further at college or university. Vocational qualifications such as BTEC's are nationally recognised qualifications. They are different from traditional GCSE's and A-Levels because they are linked to a particular area of work i.e. health and social care. Your son/daughter will develop skills, knowledge and understanding that will prepare you for the world of work and provide them with a good starting point for other qualifications such as Diplomas and apprenticeships which can be studied in the workplace. Employers value the qualities that vocational students bring to the workplace e.g. organisation, time management, and universities value the independent study skills that vocational students bring to their courses.

We are very confident and we hope that you agree, that this is the right decision and will improve your son/daughters chance of achieving a high grade at the end of the course. We have delivered this course before and the results have been historically very good.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions/queries regarding this issue.

Yours sincerely

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LoTL Social Sciences

Patrick Cummings
Head teacher